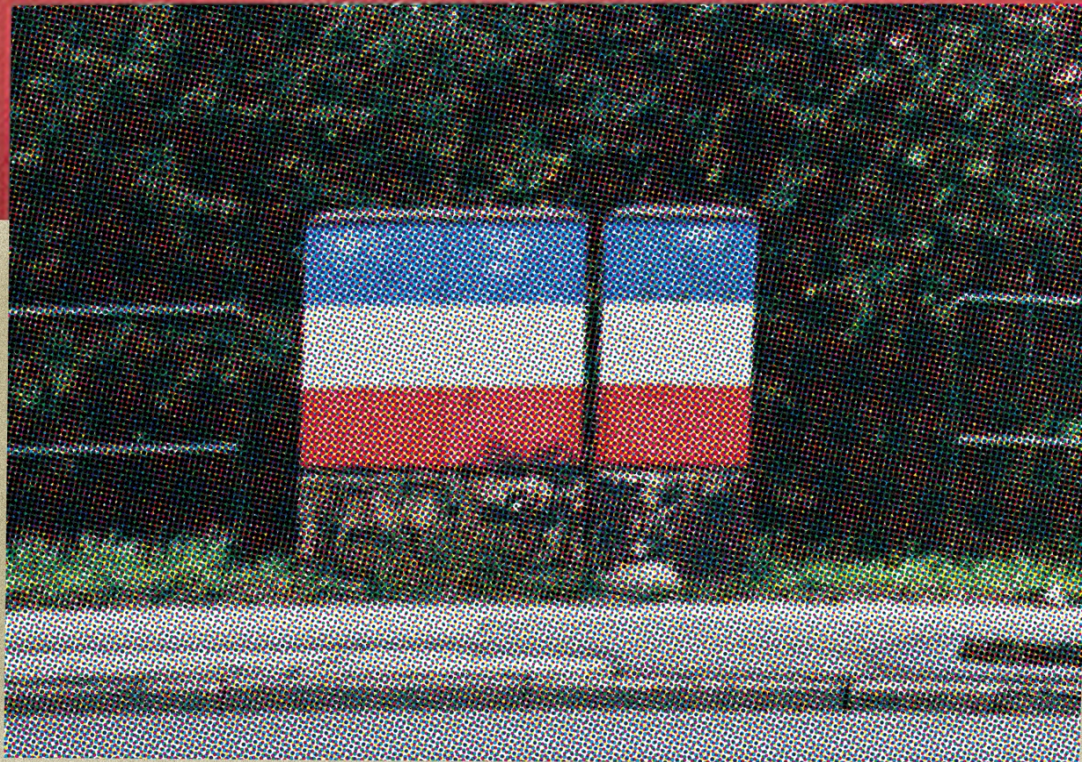


REPRESENTATION OF A COMMON CULTURE

Approaches towards
studying **Yugoslav***
cultural history through the
prism of diplomatic relations



REPRESENTATIONS OF A COMMON CULTURE

Approaches Towards Studying Yugoslav Cultural History Through
the Prism of Diplomatic Relations

Coordinated by

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Preface

Ewa Anna Kumelowski

The following volume is a compilation of student-produced texts written over the course of a semester-long Q-Team research-based learning class at the Humboldt University of Berlin. The aim of this course was to explore the various understandings and definitions of Yugoslav culture through the prism of its representations found primarily in the archives of the German Foreign Service, compelling the students to design and carry out original research projects in line with their personal academic interests. While practical circumstances made it difficult to create the ideal conditions for studying the different representations of Yugoslav culture, the authors' collective focus on the archives of the German Foreign Service, and to a much lesser extent, the German State Archives have resulted not only in thoughtful research design but also in creative approaches to an already complicated subject.

This exercise has resulted in a series of five co-authored papers treating a multitude of topics addressing the concept of culture in the Yugoslav context, as seen through the eyes of diplomatic staff. Each text is an entirely novel and original approach developed by the students themselves, making up a heterogenous compilation that explores the different stages of the research process, and providing a modest contribution to contemporary scholarship on Yugoslav cultural history. While the students have received guidance over the course of the semester, these texts are primarily reflections of their individual work as it progresses from traditional coursework assignments into true academic writing. The course structure and the resulting volume are therefore not a classical contribution to academic literature as much as an active reflective process, creating a space for young researchers to explore and form their practice as historians.

The decidedly challenging assignment resulted in the production of five cooperative chapters, mobilizing a wide range of definitions of what *Yugoslav culture* can be understood as. Chapter 1 provides a well-researched space for discussion on the importance of sports practices in nation-building endeavours, exploring how cross-border communication surrounding various sporting events can be understood within the framework of East-West political relationships. Circling around to a more traditional definition of culture, Chapter 2 explores the way in which West German audiences and diplomats interpreted Yugoslav national

and supranational cultures through the prism of TV production. Chapter 3 discusses the culture of remembrance

surrounding the Second World War, comparing the divergent discourses that characterized the visiting of German war-graves in Yugoslavia. The authors of Chapter 4 examine the tensions between various interpretations of Yugoslav folk culture and cultures through the eyes of FDR diplomats, exploring the impact of its development on folk culture and local identity-building. Finally, Chapter 5 deals with a broader understanding of the word, discussing the manner in which political and economic culture impacted relationships between Yugoslavia and West Germany.

Sports, Politics and Culture in Yugoslavia Through the Prism of Diplomatic Relations. A Miscellany About German-Yugoslav Sports Relations

Andreas Charis and Julen Kenk Fernandez

“Sport is not merely sport”.¹ Sport belongs to daily life and has increased in popularity among societies since we have been connected through the spreading of media. During the 20th century sports became an important actor in cultural terms that is difficult to ignore. Furthermore, it has also played a key role in political spheres, despite the “myth of *its political* autonomy” in which it is often imbued.² This is precisely the disregarded feature that Michael Billig refers to with the term “banal nationalism”. Sports, as a daily representation and a mass phenomenon is the scenario where those ideological habits are reproduced.³ Due to historiography, this is especially true in the history of Yugoslavia.⁴

Except for the violent game between Dinamo Zagreb and Red Star Belgrade on the 13th May 1990, very little is known about Yugoslavian football in the socialist and post-socialist context. This football match has been considered mainly by the press, as the outbreak of the war and therefore, it gained a lot of interest amidst the spectators.⁵ From the beginning itself, even during the Ottoman and the Habsburg times, led by the Balkan national movements, sports were important for the creation of national feelings, as shown with the Sokol-movement.⁶ Sports history of post-war Yugoslavia is less well researched. It particularly lacks investigations in cultural and social history.⁷ In addition, the importance of sports for realizing a feeling of belonging among Yugoslav people has so far rather been postulated than truly being proved in an empirical manner. That is why, this article aspired to further illuminate the state’s attempt

¹ Billig, Michael, *Banal nationalism*, London 1995, p. 119.

² For a detailed analysis about the connections between sport and politics, see Allison, Lincoln, *The Politics of Sport*, Manchester 1986, pp. 17-21.

³ See Billig, *Banal nationalism*, p. 6.

⁴ See Blasius, Martin, *Fußball, nationale Repräsentationen und Gesellschaft. Die Nationalmannschaft im Jugoslawien der 1980er*, in: *Südosteuropäische Hefte* 4,1 (2015), pp. 87-126, here p. 89.

⁵ Dorđević, Ivan, *Twenty Years Later: The War Did (not) Begin at Maksimir. An Anthropological Analysis of the Media Narratives about a Never Ended Football Game*, in: *Glasnik Etnografskog Instituta SANU*, 60, 2 (2013), pp. 201-14.

⁶ See Rohdewald, Stefan, *Zugänge zu einer Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte des südosteuropäischen Sports unter besonderer Berücksichtigung Jugoslawiens*, in: Anke Hilbrenner/Ekatarina Emeliatseva/Christian Koller/Manfred Zoller/Stefan Zwicker (eds.), *Handbuch der Geschichte Osteuropas*, Regensburg 2014, p. 1-18, here p. 3f.

⁷ See *ibid.*

of creating a feeling of national unity through sports and whether or not it is perceived by the German diplomats. The focus has been set on representations which can be found in material from diplomatic archives. Due to its good accessibility, the diplomatic sources of the FRG and the GDR, from their founding of the state in 1949 until the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989, have been analysed regarding sports in Yugoslavia.

It seems likely that German diplomat's comments on the Yugoslav state's attempt to create a feeling of unity in case of the interplay of two factors. Firstly, in a period of a received crisis and secondly, in case of an important sports event in Yugoslavia in which German athletes participated. So, one can assume that the 1976 European Football Championship taking place in Yugoslavia rather shortly after the first signs of upcoming nationalisms as the Croatian Spring or the 1984 Olympics in Sarajevo might be accurate starting points for researching.¹ Moreover, in 1974, West Germany hosted the Football World Cup, where the FRG ended up as the winners. Yugoslavia was present and also played against the host team. Once again in the European Championship, two years later, the West German team defeated the *Plavi*. The 1980s also saw matches between both German teams and Yugoslavia. The so-called scandal of Luxemburg of 1983 and the victory in the 1987 U20 World Cup were also interesting case studies.² However, during the whole timeframe Yugoslav domestic politics were not of interest for both German sports-politics. This seems to shift as recently as the late 1980s or at the beginning of the 1990s when ethno-nationalist politics began to escalate. At that point, a West German diplomat interpreted the central government's decision for Belgrade instead of Zagreb to apply for the Olympics in 1992 as domestically politically motivated. To him, it was intended to bolster the central state. Thus, from his point of view it was evident why the Bosniak Branko Mikulic was chosen to become the President of the Organizing Committee.³

As it was rather impossible to show the degree to which the Yugoslav state tried to generate a feeling of unity through sports in diplomatic representations, it is now intended to ask for likeable reasons that both the German diplomacies did not notice any. Since the importance of sports for a feeling of unity among the Yugoslavs is prominently postulated in research, it is likely that the state tried to generate such feelings.⁴ Therefore, the focus will be put on the

¹ See Calic, Marie-Janine, *Geschichte Jugoslawiens im 20. Jahrhundert*, Munich 2014, p. 237-55.

² These two cases are extensively studied in Blasius, *Fußball, nationale Repräsentationen und Gesellschaft*, pp. 99–114.

³ See PA/AA, *Zwischenarchiv*, Rheker, "Bewerbung Belgrads als Austragungsort der Sommerolympiade 1992", 1986 (112/727).

⁴ See for example, Dolić, Dubravko, *Die Fußballnationalmannschaft als "Trägerin nationaler Würde"?* Zum Verhältnis von Fußball und nationaler Identität in Kroatien und Bosnien–Herzegowina, in: Peter Lösche/Undine Ruge/Klaus Stolz (eds.), *Fußballwelten. Zum Verhältnis von Sport, Politik, Ökonomie und Gesellschaft*, Opladen 2002, pp. 155–74, here p. 157.

FRG's/GDR's – Yugoslav relations in sports politics.⁵ Here it is aimed to investigate the motivations of the German states to entertain relations with the south-eastern European state. It will deal with the thesis that German diplomats did not comment on nationalisms and the state's reactions in Yugoslavia, because they were too confined to the German Question.

In 1959, two years after Yugoslavia had begun to entertain relations with the GDR, both countries established sports relations manifested in a bilateral treaty. East Germany aimed to build sports relations “*auf der Grundlage der Gleichberechtigung, der gegenseitigen Achtung und Anerkennung, zum Nutzen beider Sportorganisationen.*”⁶ So, it should be interpreted as its main goal to gain de facto international recognition through (successful) participation in sports events.⁷ As it is written in an SED Central Committee's pattern: “Only through high sporting achievements can the slalom racers of the German Democratic Republic, after the declaration of sovereignty of the Soviet Union for our country, contribute to the further strengthening of the authority of our workers' and farmers' state”.⁸ This statement must be seen in its historical context. At that point the GDR was not diplomatically recognized by any Western Bloc state and the status of Berlin was not fully solved. So, it is evident that at the highest state level sport relations were being negotiated. Due to that argument, the GDR claimed tournaments between national teams instead of club competitions.⁹

Another reason lay at the domestic level. As it is postulated in the humanities, national teams can more easily mobilise the feelings of unity among widespread people than regional sports

⁵ A monograph focusing the German Yugoslav sports relations is still missing in historiography. Even three newer dissertations focusing on post-war German-Yugoslav relations do not understand sports as a remarkable political factor in diplomacy as all of them do not analyse sports relations (See Baer, Friederike, *Zwischen Anlehnung und Abgrenzung. Die Jugoslawienpolitik der DDR 1946 bis 1968*, Köln 2009; Theurer, Marc Christian, *Bonn – Belgrad – Ost-Berlin. Die Beziehungen der beiden deutschen Staaten zu Jugoslawien im Vergleich 1957-1968*, Berlin 2008 and Maricic, Alan, “Lucky that East Germany also exists”. *Yugoslavia between the Federal Republic of Germany and the German Democratic Republic (1955-1968)*, Waterloo 2019.). The German Soviet relations on that field are better researched. See Mertin, Evelyn, *Sowjetisch-deutsche Sportbeziehungen im ‚Kalten Krieg‘*, Sankt Augustin 2009. For an early approach on East Germans international sports relations, see Lehmann, Norbert, *Internationale Sportbeziehungen und Sportpolitik der DDR. Teil 1. Entwicklung und politische Funktionen unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der deutsch-deutschen Sportbeziehungen*, Münster 1986.

⁶ BArch, DY 30/60902, Arbeitsgruppe Sport, “Konzeption für die Verhandlungen mit dem Sportbund der Föderativen Volksrepublik Jugoslawien”, 1961. Our translation: “On the basis of equality, mutual respect and recognition, for the benefit of both sports organisations” Nevertheless, there have been competitions in sports between east German and Yugoslav athletes even before the treaty of 1959. For instance, ski jumpers participated in an event in Planica in 1957 (see BArch, DY 30/60634, unknown author, “Protokoll Nr. 10/57 der Sitzung des Sekretariats des ZK vom 6. März 1957”, 1957, Bl. 556/10).

⁷ Baer characterizes East Germany's foreign policy until 1972 in general as primary “im ‘Kern Deutschlandpolitik’” (Baer, *Zwischen Anlehnung und Abgrenzung*, p. 296.). So, sports mirrored its policies.

⁸ Translated from the original: “Nur durch hohe sportliche Leistungen können die Slalomfahrer der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik nach der Souveränitätserklärung der Sowjetunion für unser Land zur weiteren Stärkung der Autorität unseres Arbeiter- und Bauernstaates beitragen.” BArch, DR 5, unknown author, “Komitee-Vorlage Nr. St/21/3/54”, 1954 (536).

⁹ BArch, DR 5, unknown author, “Komitee-Vorlage Nr. St/21/2/54”, 1954 (536).

clubs can.¹⁰ For both countries it was attractive to bind its people to the state. This especially applied to the initial phase and the early 1960s when thousands of people left the GDR. The SED Central Committee's attempt for incorporating its athletes into the state is for example reflected in the fact that canoeists were taught political lessons in advance of the 1955 World Cup in Ljubljana.¹¹ In those lessons the East German athletes were also informed about the "Verrat Titos"¹² (Tito's treason) due to the state's close relations to the USSR.¹³ At that time coaches and sports officials were encouraged to bind the athletes to the state by enhancing "political ethical education, to educate sportswomen and sportsmen, who love our German country and who fully support the GDR's government and its president Wilhelm Pieck [...]."¹⁴ On the other hand Tito's state was in a similar situation as it had to constitute a supranational identity among the post-war south Slavs. Therefore, sport was also assumed to be an opportune instrument.¹⁵

Not surprisingly, the Yugoslav state was also interested in sport relations to its socialist sister state. For example, to a Yugoslav diplomat a specific national tournament held in 1964 was very important because it would result in "the enhancement and perpetuation of our bilateral relations."¹⁶ This conception of sport, which "creates politically usable resources"¹⁷ resembles the thesis that sport is not just sport.

We cannot dismiss the importance of symbolism in sports. Flag, anthem and international renown do perform their task. For example, when the 1970 World Figure Skating Championships were held in Ljubljana, East German diplomats insisted on the formulation of "German Democratic Republic" for labelling its athletes instead of "East Germany". Moreover, they claimed the country to be called GDR in the Yugoslav media.¹⁸ The significance that the GDR gave to its symbols is again reflected in another diplomatic letter. It is noted that

¹⁰ See Blasius, Fußball, nationale Repräsentationen und Gesellschaft, p. 89.

¹¹ See BArch, 5, unknown author, "Themenplan", 1954 (536)

¹² Ibid.

¹³ See Baer, Zwischen Anlehnung und Abgrenzung, p. 299. For an investigation concerning East-German motivations for bilateral sports relations with the USSR see Mertin, Sowjetisch-deutsche Sportbeziehungen, p. 117-9. Mertin comes up with the same reasons as presented in this article.

¹⁴ Translated from the original: "[...] die politisch-moralische Erziehungsarbeit zu verbessern, um Sportlerinnen und Sportler zu erziehen, die unsere deutsche Heimat lieben, die fest zur Regierung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik und unserem Präsidenten Wilhelm Pieck stehen [...]." BArch, DR 5, unknown author, "Perspektiven zur Entwicklung von Körperkultur und Sport in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik für das Jahr 1954", 1953 (542).

¹⁵ See Rohdewald, Zugänge zu einer Sozial- und Kulturgeschichte des südosteuropäischen Sports, p. 4.

¹⁶ Translated from the original: "der Verstärkung und Festigung unserer gegenseitigen Beziehungen". BArch, DY 12/5757, Generalsekretär, "Adletski Savez Jugoslavije", p. 211.

¹⁷ See Allison, The Politics of Sport, p. 12.

¹⁸ See PA/AA, M 1 C, Münzer 1. Sekretär, "Aktenvermerk über ein Gespräch des Genossen Münzer mit dem Stellvertreter des Vorsitzenden des Jugoslawischen Bundes für Sport und Körperkultur, Genossen Broegan, am 11.2.70", 1970, (1189/72).

Yugoslavia undertook “ the correct ceremonial (national anthem, flags, exact state name, in front of and in the hall GDR flags)”.¹⁹ Once more, it becomes obvious that East German diplomats insisted in terms of sports relations primarily on the state’s recognition and sovereignty while distancing itself from the FRG.

GDR’s diplomatic correspondence with Yugoslav fellows in advance of the 1974 Olympics in Munich further belongs in the context of the relations between the two Germanys. Therefore, the East German diplomats were asked to convince their socialist comrades:

*“daß die Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Olympischen Spiele 1972 integrierender Bestandteil der Bonner Politik insbesondere der sogenannten Ostpolitik geworden ist, und wie der westdeutsche Imperialismus die Olympischen Spiele 1972 für die Durchsetzung seiner politischen Ziele mißbraucht [sic!].”*²⁰

So, an enduring continuity is remarkable. From the GDR’s sovereignty from the USSR onwards, the East German state used sports as a field for distancing itself from the second German state with the aim of being internationally recognized. Hence, from their perception the FRG was an aggressive and expansionist state as it is claimed in a document from 1953 shortly after the Stalin Note and his death:

*“Die Adenauer-Regierung ist dabei mit Hilfe der Bonner- und Pariser Verträge [sic!] Westdeutschland zu einem aggressiven Werkzeug des Nord-Atlantik-Paktes zu machen. Die Regierung der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik ruft in ihrer Erklärung am 25.11.1953 alle friedliebenden Deutschen zur Sammlung gegen diese menschenfeindlichen und menschenverachtenden Bestrebungen der westdeutschen Imperialisten und Militaristen auf.”*²¹

For the same reason in an internal document an East German diplomat warned about the intensive relations between West German sports officials and those from Yugoslavia which

¹⁹ Translated from the original: “dem korrekten Zeremoniell (Nationalhymne, Fahnen, exakte Staatsbezeichnung, vor und in der Halle DDR-Flaggen).” BArch, DY 30, Münzer I. Sekretär “Entwicklung der sportlichen Beziehungen zwischen der DDR und der SFRJ”, 1970 (96510).

²⁰ BArch, DY 30, unknown author, “Diskussionsbeitrag des Leiters der DDR-Delegation auf der Konferenz der Sportleitungen der sozialistischen Länder in Ulan Bator (MVA)”, 1972 (96510) Our translation: “[...] that the preparation and the realisation of the 1972 Olympics has become an integral part of Bonn’s politics especially of the so-called *Ostpolitik* and how the West German imperialism missuses the 1972 Olympics for the realisation of its political targets.”

²¹ BArch, DR 5, unknown author, “Perspektiven zur Entwicklung von Körperkultur und Sport in der Deutschen Demokratischen Republik für das Jahr 1954”, 1953 (542) Our translation: “By means of the Bonn and Paris treaty the Adenauer-government is establishing West Germany as an aggressive instrument of the NATO. The government of the German Democratic Republic calls in his statement from 25th November 1953 all peace-loving Germans up for unity against this inhumane and misanthropic aspirations of the West German imperialists and militarists.”

should result in careful statements concerning the FRG towards them. Nonetheless, GDR's diplomacy received the bilateral sports relation as satisfying.²²

Revealingly, even in advance of the 1955 canoe World Cup in Yugoslavia, instead of focusing on Yugoslav domestic policy, the East German diplomats used the specific sport as a political instrument for the German Question:

*“Ausgehend von der Tatsache, dass ein hervorragendes Abschneiden unserer Sportler in Jugoslawien einen Beitrag darstellt, der die Remilitarisierungspolitik Adenauers durchkreuzt und damit bei der Wiederherstellung der Einheit unseres Vaterlandes und der Erhaltung des Weltfriedens dient [...]”*²³

Having the given examples in mind, we come up with the main thesis that GDR's (as well as FRG's) diplomats were too confined to the German Question to perceive Yugoslav attempts to create a feeling of unity through sports during the whole period of investigation. To conclude, it is convenient to remark that despite the lack of documents reflecting the use of sports in order to build a sense of *brotherhood and unity*, there is still research to be done on this subject. In this respect, the information we were willing to seek might presumably be in archives in former Yugoslav countries. Parallel to this, in the process we realised that the GDR and FRG were more concerned about their own national question than Yugoslavia's political issues. They had a twofold motivation to entertain sports relations. On the one hand, it was aspired to gain international recognition. On the other, it could be used to bind people to the state. Hence, sport is often surrounded by a halo of “banal” self-legitimizing symbols that convert sport into more than a mere game, which is confirmed by the determinant East German policies. Dejan Zec and Miloš Paunović state that Yugoslavia made use of sports to create a common interest as is seen in the configuration of the football club Partizan Belgrade, the national team and the heroic narrative of Stjepan Bobek and Rajko Mitić.²⁴

²² See PA/AA, M 1 C, Oskar Fischer, “Informationsmaterial über die Vorbereitung und Durchführung der Olympische Spiele 1972 in München”, 1969 (1189/72).

²³ BArch, DR 5, unknown author, “Komitee-Vorlage Nr. St/21/2/54”, 1954 (536). Our translation: “Based on the fact that an outstanding result of our sportsmen in Yugoslavia will contribute to defeating Adenauer's policy of remilitarisation, which will be conducive to the reestablishment of our fatherland's unity and the perpetuation of the world peace [...]”.

²⁴ See Zec, Dejan/Paunović, Miloš, Football's positive influence on integration in diverse societies. The case study of Yugoslavia, in: *Soccer & Society*, 16, 2-3 (2015), pp. 237-40.

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The TV-Perception of Yugoslavian Guest Workers by the FRG and Yugoslavia. A Pop Cultural Research

Erik Nisevic, Alexandra Carvajales Treptow and Lara Zissner

Guest workers played a major role in the diplomatic relations between West Germany and Yugoslavia. It is particularly interesting due to the fact that the topic is relatively under researched, and it is of great historic importance. The aim of the paper is to give a small insight into the perceptions of both sides on the subject through the analysis of contemporary media. The relevance of TV in modern politics and history was succinctly explained by Habermas, as he argued it is a sphere of public relations and that there is great political power in it¹.

The documents explored for this paper were found in the Political Archive of the Auswärtiges Amt in Berlin. The time frame in which this research is focused goes from the 1960s until the 1980s. The question that best sums up the focus of this paper is: How were the cultural relations affected by the TV perceptions of guest workers in Germany and Yugoslavia?

After analysing all the evidence, it will be demonstrated that: The West German officials were unwilling to completely integrate Yugoslavian guest workers and that Western film crews & Western programmes about Yugoslavia represented a big political threat to the Yugoslavian government.

To do so, firstly the context will be set, it will be followed by an analysis on the Yugoslavian perspective and finally a detailed examination of the German perception will be presented.

The West German perception of Yugoslavia must be examined in order to provide the context and groundwork for understanding how Yugoslav guest workers might have been perceived by the Germans, and why. To do this, three separate categories will be analysed, with the aim of giving a broad overview. These categories are, in the following order: general perception of the Yugoslav state and people, perception of different Yugoslav ethnicities, and lastly cultural relations between the two countries. To do this, the documents found in the foreign office's political archive in Berlin will be utilised, to showcase the relevant views and opinions of the West German political class, and how these in some cases might have differed to those belonging to other members of West German society.

¹ Livingstone and Lunt, Talk on television audience participation and public debate, p. 10

One might expect to find a relatively favourable opinion of the Yugoslav state among the German political class, given how it was an outlier amongst the communist states of Europe by being much more open to the West, yet the evidence from the archive does not back this up. To start with, many documents about Yugoslavia could be found in “Ostblock” compilations, even though Yugoslavia was famously non-aligned. This shows the German political class deemed Yugoslavia unimportant enough to oversimplify matters to such a degree, but also that Yugoslavia being communist was deemed more important than their non-alignment. Indeed, the fact Yugoslavia was communist seemed to play quite an important role, and a negative one at that, in the German perception of the country and its people. For example, in the document titled ‘Zweijahresprogramm zum deutsch-jugoslawischen Kulturabkommen’, the foreign office is warned not to let Yugoslav scholars into certain sections of their archives as they are communist and might be working as spies.¹

Untrustworthiness was not the only negative trait that the Germans perceived in Yugoslavians. In a document describing the protocol of a conversation with President Tito, the following is said: “*Die Jugoslawen scheinen immer davon auszugehen, daß alles, was auf dem Gebiet westlicher Integration geschehe von den Sowjets in Osteuropa nachgemacht werden würde und könnte!*”² It is clear that this statement was meant to be mocking, as given away by the unnecessary exclamation mark. Indeed, the writer seems to at once be mocking Yugoslavian naivety as well as the Eastern bloc’s incompetence (of which Yugoslavia was somewhat seen to be a part of). Furthermore, it seems these attitudes were broadly shared, as the passage was put in quotation marks with a pen by a second person, indicating that this little jab was seen as either significant or amusing enough to be highlighted.

That is not to say Yugoslavia was completely unimportant to West Germany, nor that all opinions of the German political class were negative. Mihalo Jovanovic points out that in the early 1970s, Yugoslavia had a strong economic relationship with West Germany, who was its largest West European trade partner in imports, and second largest in exports (closely after Italy).³ This economic importance was recognised by the official Jaenicke, who wrote “*Auf den Gebieten Wirtschaft und Wissenschaft finden deutsch-jugoslawische Begegnungen häufig statt.*

¹ Dr. Weinandy, Brief, Betreff: Zweijahresprogramm zum deutsch-jugoslawischen Kulturabkommen, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 118 Band 483, Belgrad 11. Mai 1976.

² Botschafter der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Bericht, Betreff: Besuch des Herrn Bundesministers des Auswärtigen in Jugoslawien, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 130 Band 2852, Belgrad 14. Dezember 1970.

³ Mihalo Jovanovic, Yugoslav Trade with ECC and COMECON countries (1972), pp. 586-591 (pp. 586-587) (Online version), <https://scholarship.law.duke.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3386&context=lcp> (Accessed on 10.02.2020).

Der Sektor Kultur sollte demgegenüber nicht zu sehr zurückstehen.”⁴ This also comes to show West Germany thought of Yugoslavia as important enough to actively facilitate cultural exchange, although this seems to have mostly been pursued for the sake of their economic relationship. In conclusion, the overall attitude of the West German political class towards Yugoslavia was not hostile, but cautious, condescending, and somewhat indifferent.

Since Yugoslavia was a multi-ethnic state, where ethnic differences were a key factor in its eventual dissolution, it would be interesting and useful to examine how the Germans might have perceived and handled this multi-ethnicity. Elinor Despalatovic explains a famous historiographical narrative, which likely played a major role in influencing West German perceptions over time. The narrative is that since Rome converted the Croats and Slovenes to Christianity, they drew them into the civilization of western and central Europe, whereas Serbs were drawn into the civilization of the Byzantine Empire.⁵ Hans Kohn went a step further by arguing that the Catholic branches of Yugoslavia shared in the ‘higher’ Austrian and Italian civilizations, whereas the Orthodox branches lived in “incredibly backward conditions” under the Ottoman Empire.⁶ His book on Pan-Slavism was written in 1953, which explains why he used outdated concepts such as ‘higher civilizations’, but is on the other hand especially useful since it was written by a member of the German-speaking world, and may be a good indicator of what the German perception and attitude towards the Yugoslav ethnicities may have been around that time, with the implication that Croats or Slovenes would generally be preferred to Serbs. However, in the case of the political class, the evidence shows that was not the case.

Overall, there was virtually no mention of the different ethnicities in the various correspondences found within the archive, as all things and people are described simply as “Yugoslav”. The only ethnicity that was ever singled out in the documents were the Croats, who were only specifically mentioned by the German officials in the context of being a destabilizing force. This can be seen in the report of an official Yugoslavian complaint against the participation of exile-Croats in the 1977 Frankfurt book fair. In it, Dr. Finke-Osiander urges the foreign office to prepare to prevent any possible anti-Yugoslavian propaganda.⁷ The same

⁴ Jaenicke, Bericht, Betreff: Deutsch-jugoslawisches Kulturabkommen und Zwei-jahresprogramm, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Zwischenarchiv Band 116727, Zagreb 18. Januar 1974, S. 2.

⁵ Elinor M. Despalatovic, 'The Roots of the War in Croatia', in Joel M. Halpern, and David A. Kideckel, eds., *Neighbours at War: Anthropological Perspectives on Yugoslav Ethnicity, Culture, and History*, University Park (Pennsylvania) 2000, pp. 81-102 (p. 84).

⁶ Hans Kohn, *Pan-Slavism: Its History and Ideology*, Notre Dame (Indiana) 1953, p. 50.

⁷ Dr. Finke-Osiander, Bericht, Betreff: Jugoslawischer Protest gegen die Beteiligung exil-kroatischer Verlage an der diesjährigen Frankfurter Buchmesse, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Zwischenarchiv Band 116731, Bonn 4. Oktober 1977, S. 2.

sentiment is expressed by Dr. Deutz, who goes a step further and suggests that the authorities should confiscate the exhibits if possible under German law.⁸ This comes to show that any past preferences the German political class may have had for the “Catholic ethnicities” of Yugoslavia were not relevant, as German actions seemed to be guided primarily by economic interest, as was demonstrated earlier; which also explains why no real effort was made to distinguish between the ethnicities, but a considerable amount of effort was put in appeasing the Yugoslav government. Another interesting example to be examined is a paper, written by a certain Conrad Behrendt, which critiques the establishment of the “Deutsch-jugoslawische Gesellschaft”.⁹ This paper was archived as an example of a far-right perspective on the matter, and indeed, the paper was littered with strong anti-communist and pro-Croat messages, which helps explain why the German political class were so quick to dismiss the Croat cause, as they grouped it together with the domestic far-right. This paper by Conrad Behrendt shows that the preference for Croats in Germany survived in certain forms. However, it was certainly not a part of the political establishment which primarily cared about trade, where such distinctions do not matter.

It was already postulated that cultural relations between West Germany and Yugoslavia were not seen as important as the economic or scientific ones, as demonstrated by the document written by Jaenicke. The extent of the importance of these relations should nonetheless be examined. Puttkamer writes of the “Sonderrolle” of Yugoslavia, which is more open to cultural exchange than the Eastern bloc countries.¹⁰ This made Yugoslavia particularly important among the communist countries of Europe, as demonstrated by the fact that Dr. Barthold C. Witte writes concerning Yugoslavia and Romania, “*Da dort unsere einzigen Kulturinstitute in Osteuropa liegen.*”¹¹ The importance of Yugoslavia specifically is further demonstrated in that of the three cities mentioned in the text (Belgrade, Zagreb, Bucharest), two are Yugoslavian. Indeed, the document shows ambition and the desire to increase cultural influence and interaction between the two countries. However, it is clear that German interests lie primarily

⁸ Dr. Deutz, Bericht, Betreff: Jugoslawischer Protest gegen die Beteiligung exil-kroatischer Verlage an der diesjährigen Frankfurter Buchmesse, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Zwischenarchiv Band 116731, Bonn 5. Oktober 1977, S. 2.

⁹ Conrad Behrendt, Papier, Betreff: Gründung einer „Deutsch-Jugoslawischen Gesellschaft“, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Zwischenarchiv Band 116727, S. 1-6.

¹⁰ Puttkamer, Bericht, Betreff: Zweijahresprogramm Juni 1977 bis Juni 1979 zum deutsch-jugoslawischen Kulturabkommen, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Zwischenarchiv Band 116731, Belgrad 9. Mai 1977, S. 1.

¹¹ Dr. Barthold C. Witte, Bericht, Betreff: Verstärkung der kulturellen Präsenz der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in Mittel- und Osteuropa, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, Zwischenarchiv Band 139459, Bonn 17. Dezember 1986, S. 2.

in expanding their influence, rather than obtaining anything of significance in the exchange. This is further mirrored in a 1987 document concerning the exchange of historians between the two countries, in which a German official Dr. Keipert estimates that “*Die Zahl interessierter deutscher Historiker dürfte insgesamt gering sein.*”¹² Nonetheless, it is clear from the document that the Germans see this cooperation as positive and want it to continue.

In conclusion, the West German officials were rather indifferent towards Yugoslavia in most regards, with their primary interests in the country being of the economic nature. The opinions they did hold appear to be mostly negative, with Yugoslavians seen as untrustworthy and naïve. The various ethnicities were seldom differentiated between, as ethnic differences were not beneficial to the economic relationship between the two countries; indeed, the Croat cause was ignored and even suppressed precisely because it posed a threat to trade. When it came to cultural policy the relative indifference towards Yugoslavia remained, and the cultural exchange was mostly pursued merely to increase German influence in Europe. Therefore, although Yugoslavia was important to West Germany both economically and culturally, West German officials did not perceive it very positively.

The Yugoslavian perspective of the portrayal of guest workers in German media

With the signing of the Labour Recruitment Agreement of 1968 between Germany and Yugoslavia, Germans’ exposure to Yugoslavia, its culture and its people went through an explosion, which led to a vast expansion in the cultural field and a boost in the socio-cultural activities between the two countries¹³. Through this agreement, Germany received a large quantity of Yugoslav guest workers, that helped create a new vision of the country and its traditions, which had generally been assigned a bad image in the West.

The principal document in which this part of the research is based, was found in the Political Archive of the Auswärtiges Amt. It provides an insight on how Yugoslavian’s perceived German interest and its media. But also, how this interferes on a political level, due to the implication of a public institution such as the Auswärtiges Amt. The diplomatic trait of this labour agreement can be expressed perfectly through the words of political scientist Karen Schoenwaelder who said that ‘labor migration was never solely an economic affair; it was also an instrument of foreign policy’.¹⁴

¹² Dr. Keipert, Bericht, Betreff: Sitzung der Gemischten deutsch-jugoslawischen Kultur-kommission im Frühjahr 1987, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 118 Band 483, Bonn 05.03.1987, S. 1.

¹³ Molnar, Imagining Yugoslavs: Migration and the Cold War in Postwar West Germany, p. 150

¹⁴ Schönwälder, The Difficult Talk of Managing Migration, p. 260.

The first piece of this series of documents is a letter from the TV Production Company Tellux, which seek to film a documentary about a Yugoslav (Slovenian) guest worker in Germany, for which they also wished to film part of it with its family whose members apart from him all remained in Yugoslavia¹⁵. This first letter was addressed at the General Consulate of the Federal Republic of Germany in Zagreb. The TV Production company received the news from the Yugoslavian consulate in the FRG that they would not be given a visa to travel and film there. The producer, Mariana Rohrmoser, is asking the Consulate to help her in this matter, that relates very closely to diplomacy.

After comings and goings between Zagreb & München, and between the diplomatic services, Tellux was granted a VISA. However, only for a day from the 29th of June until the 1st of July 1977, and it was particularly stressed that the crew should present themselves with the local authorities on arrival and on departure¹⁶¹⁷.

The information in this document being vague, still led to a lot of questions for this particular reason. Many queries came about while reading them which lead to a questioning of everything we know about Yugoslavia and connecting the dots of secondary literature with this primary source. The main question that one should ask oneself could be the following: Why was it so difficult to film a documentary there, particularly about this topic? This line of thought leads to the following sub-questions: Were the authorities scared that it could create a desire in its population to move to the West? Or that the system would be destabilized? Was this a simple move to restrict the freedom of speech of the guest worker's wife? Or were they just scared of how they would be perceived and portrayed by West German' media? Would they 'suffer' the same faith the GDR did? But most importantly, were Yugoslav authorities scared that their Nation would be portrayed as inferior to the West?

These are all questions that are valid and represent a vision about Yugoslavia that has been perpetuated many times by the West. During the Cold War it was all about power, and appearances were of great importance, the media plays a large role in this matter so this answer by the consulate could be understood in this frame. The reason for this was the intense

¹⁵ Marianne Rohrmoser, Brief, Betreff: Auftragsproduktion für den WDR "Ausländerfamilien", aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amt, ZA/ZW 116.731 (2365), München 1977.

¹⁶ Generalkonsulat der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Büronotiz, Betreff: Auftragsproduktion für den WDR "Ausländerfamilien"- Genehmigung für Dreharbeiten in Slowenien, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, ZA/ZW 116.731 (2365), Zagreb 1977.

¹⁷ Siegfried Opitz, Brief, Betreff: Auftragsproduktion für den WDR "Ausländerfamilien"- Genehmigung für Dreharbeiten in Slowenien, Bezug: Dortiges Schreiben vom 31.5.1977 sowie Ihr Telefongespräch mit Herr Lindemann und heutiges Fernschreiben, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amt, ZA/ZW 116.731 (2365), Zagreb 1977.

politicisation of journalism. Most of the times, reporters from 'enemy countries' (in this case the West) were suspected of plotting and spying in collusion with diplomats and their national secret service, which many times led to responses like the one observed in this situation¹⁸. However, as it has been mentioned previously in this paper, in comparison to other Eastern-Bloc countries Yugoslavia was relatively more open, probably due to its decision to remain neutral, but we can still see protectionism in comparison to the West.

Nationalism also plays a central part, as it could be an equivalent to power. As a relatively newly founded nation formed by several nationalities pushing a unique national narrative Yugoslavia was being closely observed, and this interview could have damaged this. The risk-potential was a big decisive factor, when taking decisions like this could be considered a conclusion. As it was stated previously, ethnic differences played a very important role in the country, and there is a constant push in all the documents to portray Yugoslavia as one nation without making a mention of the different ethnicities by the governmental institution¹⁹, and this particular situation is no exception. The idea of 'Yugoslavism' particularly in the area of culture was one that the government was very focused on exporting, to strengthen this idea of one nation in the diplomatic area. It could be the case here, where the filming would only take place in Slovenia and focus on a Slovenian family and the programme would be broadcasted abroad, that it made the authorities uncomfortable. Also influenced by the fact that in Slovenia there was a big desire for independence, as it was later demonstrated in the independence referendum of 1990, where 95.71% of those eligible to vote, did so for Slovenia to become independent.

As Maruša Pušnik explains in her work « *Remembering Utopia. The culture of everyday life in Yugoslavia* »²⁰, there was a desire in the Yugoslavian population in general for a better and wealthier life in general, inspired by the promising images of the West; and in relation to this a constant feeling of inferiority, which leads to the question of the refusal of a visa by the government being a response to not keep contributing to this feeling? The arrival of a camera crew from the West, could intensify this, maybe being more technological than what people from there had ever seen before. But most important in this matter were the questions that could be asked, the interviewed could feel inferior because maybe they were clueless about many of the asked subjects.

By filming a show like the one proposed it would awaken a great deal of interest in society, particularly in the small community in which it was filmed. It could be argued by the

¹⁸ Pedersen, *Foreign Correspondents in the Cold War*, p. 3.

¹⁹ Hashi, *The Disintegration of Yugoslavia: Regional Disparities and the Nationalities Question*, p.51.

²⁰ Pušnik, *Remembering Utopia: the culture of everyday life in socialist Yugoslavia*, p. 228.

Yugoslavian authorities, that interest in one could create a domino effect in which the curiosity for Western shows would grow and grow. For example, the massive penetration of television and particularly Western shows in Slovenian homes (1950-1980), had great consequences in socialist lives and the socialist system. Television has a great power to influence people's lives, and therefore a power which the Yugoslavian government was not ready to give up so easily. In some way what this show represented was an alternative vision to socialist everyday life.

It is hard to come up with one single specific answer to our question. But from the Yugoslavian perspective after reading on the topic, the only conclusion that can be reached is that there was great protectionism from the government to keep life isolated and unknown to outside powers, particularly from the West. It could be understood that it was due to the fear of feeling and seeming inferior, which could lead to losing morale. As it was explained previously also a fear that the great minds of the country could leave for the West when seeing the greater opportunities there.

The German perspective of the mass emigration from Yugoslavia

This section is about integration measures through pop culture or to be precise through TV shows from the German side. As seen before, Yugoslavia wanted to decide which image of Western countries was spread in their society. The Yugoslavian state couldn't control the perception of the emigrants who left the country, that's why in this abstract the mass emigration from the opposite side shall be analysed:

How did WestvGermany react to the emigration in the field of integration? How did the mass emigration affect the relation between the two states? Which measures were taken to integrate the Yugoslavian guest-workers? Which role played the perception of the guest-workers in the public field TV?

From the beginning West Germany was the most important country for Yugoslavian emigration. In the 1950s and 60s a high quantity of Yugoslavian immigrants came to Germany either illegally or by applying for political asylum.²¹ By 1966 the number increased to 96.700 Yugoslavs who were working in the Federal Republic. The actual number was probably much higher, since the official statistics counted only legal workers and didn't include illegal migrants and family members.²²

²¹ Molnar, Memory, Politics, and Yugoslav Migrations to Postwar Germany, p. 89.

²² Cf. *ibid.*, p. 93.

Most people came due to economic reasons and were hoping to improve their financial situations. The emigration was favourable for both countries: The Yugoslavian labour market was relieved whereas the German labour market could grow.²³

In October 1968 both countries finally agreed on a contract which is formerly known as the *Anwerbeabkommen*. The labour recruitment treaty took effect in February 1969, at this time Yugoslavs were already the fourth largest group of immigrants in West Germany.²⁴ After signing the contract there was another emigration boom which is considered as the “fourth phase of emigration” by Nikola Haberl.²⁵

After signing the treaty, the Federal Republic could finally start some integration measures on an official level. But at first, they didn’t make a lot of effort to do this as the German embassy in Belgrade was reporting to Bonn. The ambassador refers to two articles of the Yugoslavian daily newspapers “Politika” and “Borba” which criticized the “als ungenügend bezeichneten Betreuungsmassnahmen (sic) der staatlichen Behörden und Gewerkschaften”.²⁶ The articles further mention that the consulates which were established for the guest-workers were insufficient and too few. They also recognized a discrimination towards the Yugoslavian guest-workers as the FRG refused to pay them financial support for their children, which lead to the presumption that the FRG saw Yugoslavian emigres primarily as a workforce.

One integration attempt was made by the Referat V 6 of the department of state. On December 18th 1968 Dr. Meincke recorded that the Federal Minister of Labor and Social Order, Hans Katzer, wanted to create a TV show for Yugoslavian guest-workers which should be aired by the ARD.

The chairman of the ARD, Christian Wallenreiter, was against it because: “(...) die jugoslawischen Arbeitnehmer könnten im Bundesgebiet ihre eigenen Sender hören.”²⁷

Yugoslavian migrants couldn’t watch Yugoslavian TV shows, but they could listen to radio shows which were receivable in West Germany.²⁸

²³ Haberl, Die Abwanderung von Arbeitskräften zur Problematik ihrer Auslandsbeschäftigung und Rückführung, p. 54.

²⁴ Molnar, Memory, Politics, and Yugoslav Migrations to Postwar Germany, p. 94.

²⁵ Haberl, Die Abwanderung von Arbeitskräften zur Problematik ihrer Auslandsbeschäftigung und Rückführung, p. 50.

²⁶ Botschafter der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, Brief, Betreff: Jugoslawische Betreuungsmassnahmen [sic!] für die im Bundesgebiet tätigen Arbeitskräfte, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 85, 540.30 JUG, Bd. 2181, Belgrad 1969.

²⁷ Dr. Meincke, Vermerk, Betreff: Rundfunksendungen für jugoslawische Arbeitnehmer in Deutschland, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 85, 540.30 JUG, Bd. 2181, Bonn 1968.

²⁸ Haberl, Die Abwanderung von Arbeitskräften zur Problematik ihrer Auslandsbeschäftigung und Rückführung, p. 141.

Dr. Meincke also mentioned in his note that the TV show could be causing trouble because it was done for the Spanish, Turkish, Greek and Italian guest-workers before and these had negative effects on the relations to the states. He is suggesting that they should carefully ask the Yugoslavian ambassador about his opinion on the shows.

Two days later, on December 20th the Dg II A reflected on a note about a phone-call with Dr. Meincke. He was convinced that the TV show should be avoided because it was potentially trouble causing. He again reflects the bad experiences with other states and mentions further: “This annoyance should automatically increase in relation to the communist government of Yugoslavia. German radio stations cannot take over the broadcasts of Yugoslavian radio stations. If they are not taken over, but develop their own programs, this would have to be condemned by the Yugoslav government as an annoying influence.”²⁹

It seems they were assuming that the Yugoslavian state would presume the guest-workers could be integrated too much in German society. As mentioned in the first abstract of this paper German society was influenced by the fact that Yugoslavia had a communist regime which gave a negative picture of the people.

The hypothesis that the political class was very cautious towards Yugoslavia seems validated with the careful and almost timid reaction the Auswärtiges Amt had to the idea of the TV show.

Another fear of the Federal Republic is mentioned in another document. It’s a letter to the different resorts in the Auswärtige Amt and the final resolution against the TV show. In this letter Dr. Truckenbrodt speaks about the different ethnic groups from Yugoslavia. These groups are having conflicts with each other and he is afraid that the TV show would intensify the dispute. The conflicts he mentions are based on groups of radical Croatian separatist movements which were founded in West Germany in the late 1950s.³⁰

Their biggest attack was the bombing of the Yugoslav Trade Mission in Bonn in November 1962.³¹ Nikola Haberl is also speaking about mafia structures when emigres, in this case more likely refugees who had no official status in Germany, were forced to pay money to these groups so they could stay.³²

²⁹ Original Zitat: “Dieser Ärger müsste sich automatisch im Verhältnis zur kommunistischen Regierung Jugoslawiens noch potenzieren. Deutsche Rundfunkanstalten können nicht die Sendungen jugoslawischer Rundfunkanstalten übernehmen. Werden sie nicht übernommen, sondern eigene Sendungen ausgearbeitet, müsste (sic!) dies von der jugoslawischen Regierung als lästige Beeinflussung verurteilt werden.“ in: Dg II A, Aktennotiz, Betreff: Rundfunksendungen für jugoslawische Arbeitnehmer in Deutschland, aufbewahrt im Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 85, 540.30 JUG, Bd. 2181, Bonn 1969.

³⁰ Molnar, Memory, Politics, and Yugoslav Migrations to Postwar Germany, p. 65.

³¹ Cf. *ibid.*, p. 67.

³² Haberl, Die Abwanderung von Arbeitskräften zur Problematik ihrer Auslandsbeschäftigung und Rückführung, p. 119.

It seems that the conflicts of the different ethnic groups which led to the Yugoslavian Wars in the 1990s and began to become visible in the 1980s already began to become visible in the FRG before. Germany didn't know about the intensity and the consequences of where these conflicts would lead to - and so it seems that they tried to stay neutral in the series of conflicts. Maybe because they didn't know how to react and didn't want to make it worse, they declined the TV shows.

The letter also shows somewhat of an ignorant attitude towards the different ethnicities as they only mention the Croats. As explained in the first abstract of this paper this seems to be based on the strong anti-Yugoslavian and pro-Croat groups which existed in Germany. The fact that they didn't try to appease the situation could be based on economic interest or due to the fact that both governments were intending for the Yugoslavian guest-workers to return home after a specific period of time.

It seems that this attitude changed during the time because information centres for guest-workers were established in 1973. They weren't led by a state-run organisation, the Arbeiterwohlfahrt was responsible for them.

As a final hypothesis one could say that the FRG had a very cautious attitude towards the Yugoslavian guest-workers. They didn't want to intervene too much as they were afraid of the Yugoslavian reaction. The precarious attitude seems to be based on the communist regime and the uncertainty on how to interact to it during the time of the Cold War.

Conclusion

Until now, the topic of Yugoslavian guest workers has formed a blank space in historical research, which is why it is very difficult to make generalizing statements. This paper tries to give first answers and an overview for future research.

Within this research the general perception of Yugoslavs in West Germany was analysed through the prism of television; this field was particularly relevant during the 1960s and 1970s due to the great influx of Yugoslavian guest workers into Germany. Using this and other archival evidence, a new light was shed on the cultural relations between the two countries.

As it has been demonstrated throughout this paper, there was fear and distrust from both parties. This is a typical trait of the Cold War setting, despite Yugoslavia officially being non-aligned. From the Yugoslavian perspective it was obvious that protecting their society and ideology was a priority, to which the West German way of life was a threat. In relation to this, it is no surprise that German officials were cautious not to endanger diplomatic relations by interfering in matters that were strongly vinculated to delicate topics in Yugoslavian society.

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Commemoration of the Second World War in Yugoslavia and its Impact on Culture

Stephanie Truskowski, Luisa Jabs, Florian Schäfer and Charis Gill

The new communist Yugoslav state that emerged after the Second World War had to contend with the legacy of the bloody conflict. The experience of the war in Yugoslavia was complicated and violent, with multiple groups involved, often leaving destruction in their wake. Stanley Payne describes the war as “Three distinct civil wars and one international conflict, waged both consecutively and simultaneously.”¹ The eventual victory of the communist partisans led by Tito allowed for the recreation of a Yugoslav state after the war with a philosophy of communism independent of Stalinism. However, this did not bely the loss of life, or the traumatic memories.

After the Second World War, both West Germany (FRG) and Yugoslavia (SFRY) were left to contend with the complicated memory of the war. On both sides, political questions of commemoration and remembrance became part of separate national narratives of perpetration and victimhood. These narratives came into contact with each other in the difficult matters of commemorative parades, holidays, and war cemeteries. Much of the scholarship on the Yugoslav portrayal of the war has focused on the dominant narrative of the Yugoslav state. The predominant narrative of the Yugoslav government concerning the Second World War was that the communist partisans triumphed over fascism.²

These overarching narratives of the war also came into conflict with the personal memories of people who had lost family members in the war. The past can be interpreted through a variety of lenses, and each is grounded in a fundamentally different usage of the past, with different purposes. The version of the past presented in the narrative of a state is not the same as that passed through the stories of families. Different historical actors each have their own view of the past; an individual is guided by their personal memory, and states are driven by maintaining narrative. Within the realm of diplomatic relations, personal memories of individuals created tension with the official narrative of the states involved because their understanding of the past is different.

¹ Payne, Stanley G., *A History of Fascism, 1914-1945* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1996), p. 409.

² Karge, Heike, “Mediated remembrance: local practices of remembering the Second World War” in: *Tito's Yugoslavia, European Review of History—Revue européenne d'histoire* (Feb, 2009), p. 50.

The case of war graves provides a case study where many actors interact and demonstrate their own interpretation of a site of memory. Sites of memory provide the best subject to discuss contested ideas of the past, because they create a concrete place for the overlap of memory and narrative. The definition of sites of memory according to Jay Winters, is, “physical sites where commemoration takes place.”¹ Graveyards are an interesting example, because they combine personal mourning with, in the case of war cemeteries, the national narrative.² Because of this, a multi-layered approach that includes many actors is the most effective. As Winters argues, “Decentering the history of commemoration ensures that we recognize the regional, local, and idiosyncratic character of such activities and the way a top-down approach must be supplemented by a bottom-up approach.”³ This article will take an approach that examines both governmental narrative and the generational memory of individuals, which will demonstrate the layered nature of issues like war graves and public commemoration.

The period of this analysis will be the 1970s, because this was the period when there was the strongest pressure to commemorate the war. As Eelco Runia claims, what he terms the “excess of memory” created by generation memory was the primary motivation for the wave of commemoration that happened in the 1970s.⁴ He claims that, “The recent desire upsurge in the “desire to commemorate” can be pinpointed rather exactly: it started in the mid-1970s.”⁵ As he states, the key force in the 1970s was, “the transformation of the memory of those who actually witnessed a conflagration into a commemorative response of their descendants.”⁶ For this reason, the focus of this analysis will be on the period of the 1970s. This period saw the negotiation of commemoration between actors that represented generational and governmental actors who acted to protect narrative.

Through the diplomatic correspondences that passed through the embassy in Belgrade and the letters received by the embassy, it is possible to see each set of actors in the complicated question of personal and national remembrance. It is possible to see the tensions between the political narratives of two post-war states, and the tension between personal commemoration and political narratives. By employing a methodology that handles memory on different levels

¹ Winters, Jay, “Sites of Memory”, in: Radstone, Susannah, Schwartz, Bill (ed.), *Memory: Histories, Theories, Debates*, (Fordham University, 2010), p. 312.

² Tzortzopoulou-Gregory, Lita, “Remembering and Forgetting: The Relationship Between Memory and the Abandonment of Graves in Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Greek Cemeteries”, in: *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, Vol. 14, No. 2 (June, 2010), p. 286.

³ Winters, *Sites of Memory*, p. 317.

⁴ Runia, Eelco, “Burying the Dead, Creating the Past”, in: *History and Theory*, Vol. 46, No. 3 (Oct., 2007), p. 322.

⁵ Runia, p. 320.

⁶ Runia, p. 320.

it is possible to address the question of how personal grief can become entangled in the negotiation of national narrative between two different countries.

This analysis will provide another perspective by including new actors outside of the Yugoslav government. This will include three different sets of actors, and their own interpretation of the issues. The first section will deal with the personal and generational memories of individuals through their letters to the embassy. The second section will discuss the correspondence of German intermediary organizations. The role of intermediary organizations, which will be the linchpin of this analysis is to bridge the gap between the state and the individual. This section will present both the German and Yugoslav sides of the issue, and the points of disagreement between them. The final section will present the narratives of both governments through correspondence between diplomats. Together, they will demonstrate that personal memory and state narratives were often in conflict, and intermediary organizations were necessary to arrange commemoration.

Memory as Expressed in Letters from Individuals

This section will deal with three examples of personal letters that were sent to the consulate concerning war graves. They consist of one letter exchange with Fritz Heim that contains three letters sent in November of 1976 and March of 1977, and a letter from Hans Eberhard Klughardt from the 21st of October 1971. The documents from other organizations like the “Verein deutscher Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V” indicate that there were many other such letters.⁷ However, these are the letters that are preserved in the archive of the embassy in Belgrade. For this reason, they can be treated as examples of the way that people expressed their personal desire to mourn, and not as an exceptional few. The way that they express their grievances is an indication of the role of personal memory in the question of war graves. The desire to commemorate comes from their familial connections, and they frame their request in terms of the personal instead of the political, because the matter is not political to them on a personal level.

The letters from individuals are driven by generational memory, so it is necessary to define both kinds of memory. Personal memory can only really be created by the direct experience of an individual.⁸ It is the direct result of an individual being involved in historical developments. In this respect, memory is not constructed, because it is built from experience. However, as van Vree argues, it can also be impacted by predominant narratives. The human memory is not

⁷ Müller, R., *Deutscher Kriegsgräber in Tekija*, PA AA, BELG, RK 655.00

⁸ van Vree, Frank, “Absent memories”, in: *Cultural Analysis* Vol. 12 (2013), p. 2.

entirely static, and memories can be impacted by the conditions around a person.⁹ Memories can be “absent” or “frozen” in the sense that they never are expressed because of the pressure of the dominant narrative. In this case, those who directly experienced the war, like former soldiers may not be able to express their own memory because of the state narrative. So, it may take a generation for memory to be expressed.

Generational memory¹⁰ is a different understanding of the past drawn from the either direct retelling of the past from a relative, or the experience of imagining the experience of relatives. Marianne Hirsh defines the same concept- which she calls “postmemory” - as, “the relationship that the generation after those who witnessed cultural or collective trauma bears to the experiences of those who came before, experiences that they “remember” only by means of... stories, images, and behaviors”¹¹ Her definition stresses the emotional impact of this kind of inherited memory. As she states, generational memory, “approximates memory in its affective force.”¹² This emotional investment leads to a desire to commemorate the experience of the past generation.

Both sets of letters are motivated by familial connections, which corresponds to the idea that the desire to commemorate is driven by generational connections. The case of Fritz Heim is very clear in this respect. He is writing to find a grave site where he can mourn his father.¹³ This fits into the theory that traumatic experience is passed from one generation, to the next that mourns it. The case of Hans Klinghardt is a bit more complicated, since he is asking about the grave location of his brother-in-law. His brother-in-law, Dr. Martin Speer, was soldier in Greece during the war, and was a prisoner of war in Yugoslavia after the war. Dr. Speer died in a prison camp in Yugoslavia and was buried somewhere near it. According to Klinghardt, there was a delay in him and his wife being informed about the death. Once they were informed, they began a trip to Yugoslavia to find where he could be buried.¹⁴ This presents a slightly more complicated idea of the inheritance of memory. It is not being passed directly from one generation to another. The sister in this case inherited the memory of her brother. However, since it is the imagined experience of a relative, it still fits the definition of generational memory. Klinghardt also provides a demonstration of how knowledge is passed. He states his

⁹ Ibidem, p. 4.

¹⁰ Sometimes also called postmemory, but I am choosing to use generational memory to keep terminology consistent.

¹¹ Hirsch, Marianne, “The Generation of Postmemory” in: *Poetics Today* Vol. 29, (2008), p. 106.

¹² Ibidem, p. 109.

¹³ Heim, Fritz, Letter from Fritz Heim to the Embassy, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688.

¹⁴ Klinghardt, Hans Eberhard, Letter from Hans Eberhard Klinghardt, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688, p. 1.

brother-in-law's history in specific detail, though he only knows it through his brother-in-law's comrades.¹⁵ Thus, the memory in this case was created by imagining the person's experience through the stories of others. In both cases, generational memory is the primary motivation for them to seek to commemorate their relatives.

Both letters view commemoration as non-political, and state that their own desire is not political. Fritz Heim's letter is short, and he states that he only wants to know if there is a gravesite that he can visit. He says that "this should be possible from Belgrade with a telephone call to the site."¹⁶ He clearly views the issue as uncomplicated and does not imagine that there is a political dimension to discussing the graves of German soldiers in Yugoslavia. Hans Klinghardt's letter shows a greater understanding of strained political relations between Germany and Yugoslavia, likely informed by his own experience of trying to communicate with Yugoslav authorities. He details his experience of traveling to the SFRY with his wife and being told first that his brother-in-law was buried in "Vrsac, Soldatenfriedhof, Parzelle D, Grab 187."¹⁷ However, when he inquired at the municipal government in Vrsac, he was told that there was no gravesite, and that the authorities could not aid him in finding one. He tells the story of finding an old resident of Vrsac who told them where the former prisoner-of-war camp was located. From this frustration, he assumes that the Yugoslav government does not want to admit to killing German prisoners-of-war.¹⁸ So, he understands that there is a political dimension to this issue and it is not simply a matter of finding a grave. However, he still views it as an issue of commemoration. He makes the comparison of gravesites for concentration camps, which he says were created for remembrance. He says that there should be reciprocal remembrance.¹⁹ He believes that it should be the same for a Yugoslav prisoner of war camp. This indicates that he fundamentally views this as a question of commemoration, not one of politics.

The existence of these letters, and the frustration that they express highlight the needs for intermediary organizations, because individuals are unable to negotiate with Yugoslav authorities on their own. Klinghardt's letter demonstrates this, because he details how he

¹⁵ Klinghardt, Hans Eberhard, Letter from Hans Eberhard Klinghardt, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688, p. 2.

¹⁶ Heim, Fritz, Letter from Fritz Heim to the Foreign Minister, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688, translated by author.

¹⁷ Klinghardt, Hans Eberhard, Letter from Hans Eberhard Klinghardt, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688, p. 2.

¹⁸ Klinghardt, Hans Eberhard, Letter from Hans Eberhard Klinghardt, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688, p. 2.

¹⁹ Klinghardt, Hans Eberhard, Letter from Hans Eberhard Klinghardt, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688, p. 2.

initially tried to direct his inquiries to the Yugoslav authorities.²⁰ He was met with either frustration or denial, so he is appealing to the German consulate. He also says that he is writing to the Yugoslav embassy with this issue, but that he believes that he will need the support of the German embassy as well.²¹ This letter demonstrates that it was necessary to appeal to those with more authority to act as intermediaries.

Organisations as Intermediates between Governments and Individuals

This section is dedicated to specialised organisations such as the “Verein deutscher Kriegsgräberfürsorge e.V”. (VdK) on the West German side. Fortunately, there is a wealth of documents about correspondences between these organisations and embassies. Contrary to the previous section, the organisations pursue a certain goal with their actions, that cannot be reduced to personal interest. This goal can but does not have to be political. In many cases we can see such organisations as the VdK working as intermediaries between individuals, seeking to personally commemorate their own loved ones, and governments trying to maintain their politically charged commemorative practices and narratives of the Second World War. This makes the correspondence found from these organisations especially useful in demonstrating the conflict between the personal and the political when it comes to WWII memory and commemoration. This can be seen in much of the communication between the VdK and the Yugoslavian government, often through the West German embassy in Belgrade, on the issue of German war graves in Yugoslavia. The FRG organisation argues this to be an issue of personal commemoration for individuals with deceased loved ones in the SFRY and more broadly a humanitarian issue on the treatment of the war dead. Whereas the Yugoslavian side saw this issue as more political: war graves forming part of a wider narrative on the Yugoslav experience of WWII and the contemporary issues faced by the post-war Communist state.

The West German perspective

In this section, the West German perspective on the situation of war graves in Yugoslavia will be discussed. Therefore, to create this perspective, certain documents from the *Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amts* were analysed and certain sections displaying opinions were extracted. Over 200 pages of documents about the topic of war graves from World War II were

²⁰ Klinghardt, Hans Eberhard, Letter from Hans Eberhard Klinghardt, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688, p. 2.

²¹ Klinghardt, Hans Eberhard, Letter from Hans Eberhard Klinghardt, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Amt, 17.688, p. 3.

able to provide an approximate overview. How representative the selection of the conserved information is, has to be at least briefly reflected in the preliminary considerations. Since the sources were derived from a German archive, this immediately suggests two things: Firstly, that opinions (which were preserved) might tend to favour the West German narrative. And secondly, that the decision about the preservation of documents was determined by the West German side. Against this stands the richness of sources to be found in the archive which by contrast suggests that the sample of sources was not highly selective.

Contextually, there are three major points to be made in this chapter: Firstly, that West German officials believe the question of war graves to be non-political, but rather a personal issue concerning personal mourning. To this statement, a conversation between two ministers can be addressed. Both are discussing the topic of how political war graves are and how to prospectively proceed with this issue. The document itself is a translation from advisor Dr. Seibert from 23rd June 1971 of a conversation between SFRY foreign minister Mirko Tepavac and FRG foreign minister Walter Scheel that took place on November 26th 1970 in Belgrade.²² In this special case, Tepavac responds to Scheel that he thinks the question of German war graves in Yugoslavia should be unrelated to political relations between the two countries. He mentions that he addressed the same remarks to West German Chancellor (also referred to as *Bundestkanzler*) Willy Brandt before. Hereafter, he then contradicts his current statement by connecting the issue of German war graves in Yugoslavia to the payment of reparations for national-socialist crimes on Yugoslavian ground. Summarised, Tepavac states: "German war graves do not have to be directly related to the question of reparations for Yugoslavian victims, although, as long as the issue of reparations stays unresolved, there cannot be a solution to the question of war graves either."²³ Few quotations are able to present the torn position West German officials were confronted with more vividly.

Secondly, West German opinion is that the matter of war graves relates to humanitarian issues. Proof for this argument is provided by a report concerning a meeting between the former West German ambassador in Yugoslavia, Garov Altman, and Prof. Dr. Willi Thiele, who served the VdK as president from 1970 to 78. During the conversation, Thiele states that caretaking for war graves is a humanitarian way to conduce peace. The talks themselves took place on 14th

²² Dr. Seibert, Anlage zum Bericht der Botschaft Belgrad Nr. 571/71 vom 29.6.1971 - IV 3-85.00, PA AA, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688.

²³ Dr. Seibert, Anlage zum Bericht der Botschaft Belgrad Nr. 571/71 vom 29.6.1971 - IV 3-85.00, PA AA, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688; the original text is "Diese Frage müsse auch nicht direkt mit der Frage der Entschädigung jugoslawischer Opfer nazistischer Verfolgungen verbunden werden, wenn auch, solange die Frage der Entschädigung ungelöst sei, die Frage der Pflege der Gräber nicht gelöst werden könne." German translation by author.

of September 1977 as *Bundeskanzler* Schmidt and Yugoslavian president Josip Broz Tito reportedly agreed upon beforehand.²⁴ Gavro Altman has been entrusted with the task to coordinate the issue of German war graves in Yugoslavia. On one side, Thiele explicitly stresses that war graves are a humanitarian issue. On the contrary, an employee of the foreign ministry is reported to repeat reservations against a Yugoslavian support in the matter. The reasons are cited as “emigre-terrorism, ‘Neo-Nazism’ and guest-worker issues.”²⁵ Henceforth, Altman is noted to be embarrassed by the remarks of the ministry employee. This document proves that there certainly were reservations held against the plans from Yugoslavian side, since the foreign ministry employee is cited to only restate previously mentioned arguments. Unfortunately, the time, place and person stating the remarks in the first place are not evident from the analysed documents. Nevertheless, this report illustrates the two corresponding sides and their respective views on the matter and is also able to provide an insight into argumentation structures.

The third major point to be made in this section relates to the issue of war graves providing a possibility for reconciliation between the two countries. Thus, this can for example be seen in a letter sent from West German ambassador Horst Grabert, who is Altman’s successor, to the president of the VdK, Dr. Josef Schneeberger, in which he refers to a conversation between the FRG’s foreign minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and Josip Vrhovec about war graves as sites of reconciliation. The letter is an answer to a previous letter from Schneeberger. In the reply from 13th August 1980, Grabert is able to provide two important levels of information. Firstly, ambassador Grabert is assuring president Schneeberger of his help and support concerning the matter of war graves. And secondly, he expresses his happiness about a success in their efforts: Foreign minister Genscher himself laid a wreath to mourn the war dead at Serbian soldier’s graveyard Banovo Brdo and stressed the importance of the issue.²⁶ Thereby, the influence of the organisational level, here through the VdK, on the state-political level can be illustrated. Similarly, the VdK promoted an agreement with first the Soviet Union and later Russia about the graves of German soldiers on their territory. However, negotiations with the USSR started only during the late 1980s and therefore, more than ten years after the research period for this paper.²⁷ Anyway, it is important to bear in mind that the VdK did not only work with

²⁴ Hofmann, Fernschreiben (verschlüsselt) an 513, PA AA, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688.

²⁵ Hofmann, Fernschreiben (verschlüsselt) an 513, PA AA, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688; the original text is in German, translation by author.

²⁶ Grabert, Horst, *No title*, PA AA, BELG, RK 655.20.

²⁷ Compare: Siegl, Elfie, „Versöhnung über Gräbern, Deutsche Kriegsgräberfürsorge in Russland“, in: Osteuropa 58 Jg. 6 (2008), p. 308f.

Yugoslavia, but rather pursued the goal of advancing the general issue of German war graves from the World Wars following their motto “rapprochement – reconciliation – peace.”²⁸

As for the state political situation in the Federal Republic of Germany, the overall policy underwent certain changes during the time period of the 1970s. Important to mention are the two *Bundeskanzlers* Willy Brandt (1969 to 1974) and Helmut Schmidt (1974 to 1982). Both have been mentioned before and are surely highly involved in the shaping of West Germany’s state level politics. Kaya Shonick expresses a thesis about Brandt: He, when he used to be minister of foreign affairs, took a leading role in the forging of the guest-worker agreement between the FRG and SFRY in 1968 to aid peace and reconciliation between the two countries.²⁹ During his tenure as *Bundeskanzler*, Brandt promoted a new eastern policy called *Neue Ostpolitik* which favoured a friendly approach towards countries in the East.³⁰ The changes which the years of social democratic reign in West Germany brought, enhanced the chances of state officials to make public appearances in Yugoslavia. Furthermore, the fact that all the West German state officials cited from the documents so far in this part are either members of Brandt’s or Schmidt’s cabinets, supports the importance of the new approaches introduced by them.

Thus, adding to the wider picture of West German politics: Also, regarding the relationship between the FRG and Yugoslavia certain developments can be observed. In the documents several mentions are made about the relations between the two countries. Chronologically, the first mention of this topic to be found in the given documents is made in January 1976.³¹ In that respect, the ties between the FRG and Yugoslavia are mentioned to have normalised. Following this, a letter from October 1979 reports that talks about German war graves in Yugoslavia have been abandoned due to worsening relations, the author assumes.³² A source from about the year 1983 refers to the relationship as improved.³³ Eventually, these excerpts of opinions and reports can only certainly prove that first and foremost, circumstances changed over time and were neither constantly bad nor good and additionally, that the changes influenced the issue of war graves by bettering or lowering the chances of bilateral exchange. Moreover, economic factors might have played a role in the developments since West Germany’s economic growth

²⁸ Ibidem, p. 309.

²⁹ Shonick, Kaja, “Politics, Culture and Economics: Reassessing the West German Guest Worker Agreement with Yugoslavia”, in: *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol. 44, No. 4 (Oct. 2009), p. 719.

³⁰ Compare: Götemaker, Manfred, “Entspannung und Neue Ostpolitik 1969-1975”, available at: <https://www.bpb.de/izpb/10344/entspannung-und-neue-ostpolitik-1969-1975> [last accessed 09.02.2020].

³¹ Krah, Kriegsoferversorgung für Jugoslawien, PA AA, BELG, RK 544.01

³² Neumann, Hans Günter, *No title*, PA AA, BELG, RK 655.00

³³ *Unknown author*, Beziehungen Jugoslawien - BRD, PA AA, MfAA ZR, 742/87; the document refers to one of *Bundespräsident* Karl Carstens’ visits to Yugoslavia which took place in September 1983.

stagnated in the early 1970s for the first time in the post-war era.³⁴ The documents are also able to provide an insight by stating the wish from West German side to send about 320.000 guest-workers back to the SFRY to relax the situation in the FRG.³⁵ Ultimately, these new developments only underline the prior point about state politics affecting the relations between West Germany and Yugoslavia.

Unfortunately, disagreement in the aforementioned assumptions leads to frustration regarding the question of German war graves on Yugoslavian ground, especially on the West German side. The apolitical perception was not echoed by Yugoslavian officials and therefore, conflicts arose.

The Yugoslav perspective

The next section will contrast the West German perspective with the Yugoslav stance on the issue of war graves. Investigating this topic through the archival material of the Auswärtiges Amt means that the Yugoslav perspective can only be interpreted through their dealings with West German organisations and embassies. This does not account for variations and inconsistencies in the Yugoslav perspective on the Second World War, their memories or commemoration of it. Nevertheless, much of the Yugoslav government's official stance on WWII commemoration can be ascertained from their response to the question of war graves.

Firstly, it is clear that the Yugoslav sides view the issue of war graves is far more political than the West Germans, most notably Professor Willi Thiele, argues it to be. This disagreement can be found in subtle places in their communication, even on the West German side, on why the question of German war graves is complicated in Yugoslavia. Documents of correspondence between the German Embassy in Belgrade and Bonn consistently note the 'psychological barriers' or 'stress' in Yugoslavia when it comes to the question of war graves, often meaning that the issue must be handled delicately and gradually.³⁶ There is also an example in which the case of German war graves in Yugoslavia is compared with Yugoslav war graves in Germany - an attempt on the German side to remove the issue from national

³⁴ Compare: Möller, Horst, „Die 1970er Jahre als zeithistorische Epochenschwelle“, in: Gotto, Bernhard, Möller Horst, Mondot, Jean, Pelletier, Nicole (ed.), Nach „Achtundsechzig“, Krisen und Krisenbewusstsein in Deutschland und Frankreich in den 1970er Jahren, München 2013, 1. Auflage, p. 2f; Pleinen, Jenny, „Die bundesrepublikanische Migrationsgeschichte der „langen“ 1970er Jahre“, in: Dietrich, Tobias, Zey-Wortmann, Katharina (ed.), Die 1970er Jahre in Geschichtswissenschaft und Unterricht, Frankfurt am Main 2012, 1. Auflage, p. 78ff.

³⁵ *Unknown author*, Beziehungen Jugoslawien - BRD, PA AA, MfAA ZR, 742/87; Caution: The source refers to the early 1980s.

³⁶ W. Hofmann, „Kriegsgräber in Jugoslawien,“ 25.04.1977, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688; Puttkammer, „Kriegsgräber in Jugoslawien,“ 17.05.1977, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688; Puttkammer, „Kriegsgräber in Jugoslawien,“ 25.05.1977, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688.

narratives of WWII and make it objective, apolitical and about all the war-dead. This, the Yugoslav official UStS Bernadić argues is not an acceptable comparison, as those buried in Germany are ‘victims of fascism’, denoting a higher moral status to those ‘victims’ than the Germans buried in Yugoslavia (the implied perpetrators).³⁷ Bernadić defends the importance of the historical context of these deaths from German attempts to de-politise the issue because German war graves remained significant to Yugoslavia’s post-war narratives of fascism and victimhood.

The issue of fascism was raised by the Yugoslav side on more occasions. In the Stenographic report of a meeting which took place on 14th September 1977 between Professor Thiele and Yugoslavian functionaries, namely Garov Altman, the Yugoslav officials highlight the wider political implications of the issue of war graves for the Yugoslav government. Ljubo Jovanovic notes instances of ‘resurrected elements or remnants of fascism’ in West Germany which they see as a hindrance to the relationship between the two nations.³⁸ For the Yugoslav side to raise the issue of contemporary fascism and terrorism in West Germany during a meeting to discuss German war graves demonstrates the discord between their perspectives. The personal commemoration of West Germans came into conflict with the Yugoslav government policy on WWII commemoration and their narrative on fascism both during the Second World War and after. For the Yugoslav government German war graves were considered part of the wider contemporary political issues between their nations. It is important to note that Garov Altman does agree with Professor Thiele during their meeting that the commemoration of the war-dead is indeed a humanitarian issue, even noting the Geneva Convention, but maintains that the ‘character’ of the Second World War cannot be forgotten³⁹.

Due to the ‘psychological’ factor of WWII memory in Yugoslavia and the importance of WWII commemorative policy for the Yugoslav government, a key restriction Garov Altman and other Yugoslav functionaries insisted on was confidentiality and discretion. They often insisted that tackling the issue of German war graves should be done gradually, emphasising the importance of ‘small steps.’⁴⁰ This attitude was understood and echoed by the West Germans. Chancellor Helmut Schmidt even emphasised the importance of caution and a gradual approach to Prof. Thiele before the 14th September meeting.⁴¹ This is most likely due to fears

³⁷ Puttkammer, “Kriegsgräber in Jugoslawien,” 25.05.1977, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688, p. 2.

³⁸ Stenographic Record, 14.09.1977, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688, p. 28.

³⁹ Stenographic Record, 14.09.1977, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688, p. 19-20.

⁴⁰ Stenographic Record, 14.09.1977, PA AA, BELG, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688, p. 20.

⁴¹ Helmut Schmidt, “Letter from Chancellor Helmut Schmidt to Professor Willi Thiele,” 01.07.1977, PA AA, AV Neues Archiv, 17.688.

on the Yugoslav side of a negative reaction to the remembrance of the German war-dead, as a contentious issue in Yugoslavia. Such work could interfere with the Yugoslav policy of WWII commemoration, their historical narrative of the Second World War and their national narrative of fascism altogether.

As stated previously, the Yugoslav perspective on WWII commemoration cannot wholly be interpreted from these documents. The nature of archival material at the Auswärtiges Amt means only the Yugoslav government's response to the question of war graves can be analysed to investigate their wider policy of WWII commemoration. The historian Heike Karge has researched some of the discrepancies between local WWII commemoration in Yugoslavia and the official state policy, criticising the traditional historiography of a 'frozen' narrative of the Second World War in Yugoslavia.⁴² Therefore, it is important to refute the idea of a singular narrative of the Second World War amongst the people of Yugoslavia or in its commemoration. But the Yugoslav government did promote a nationalising, singular policy of WWII commemoration across Yugoslavia. Whether or not this was successful in enforcing a shared memory of the Second World War, the nature of this policy, as deeply political and contentious for the Yugoslav government, is evident in these documents.

Inter-government communication and national narratives

This section will deal with the national narratives of each government, and how they appear in diplomatic inter-governmental correspondence. Therefore, it is necessary to define narrative. Narrative refers to the version of the past created and reproduced by governments with the goal of creating a unified version of the past. This process involves taking pieces of the past and creating a story that resonated with the vision of the state that serves the government. As stated by Pierre Nora, "Representation proceeds by strategic highlighting, selecting samples, and multiplying examples."⁴³ It is necessary when creating any kind of representation of the past to focus on certain events as examples. However, in the case of governmental presentations, the selection is deliberate and in service of the politics of the present. Lowenthal defines the process specifically as upgrading the past, selectively forgetting, and contriving genealogy.⁴⁴ These processes forget that which is uncomfortable to the present and highlight events or figures that

⁴² Karge, Heike, "Mediated remembrance: local practices of remembering the Second World War in Tito's Yugoslavia", *European Review of History—Revue européenne d'histoire* (2009), 16:1, 49-62, DOI: 10.1080/13507480802655394.

⁴³ Pierre Nora, "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire", in: *Representations*, No. 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory (Spring, 1989), p. 17.

⁴⁴ Lowenthal, David, "Fabricating heritage", in: *History & Memory*, Volume 10, Number 1 (Spring 1998), p. 12.

demonstrate the virtue of the shared heritage. As Lowenthal states, “Celebrating some bits and forgetting others, heritage reshapes a past made easy to embrace.”⁴⁵ Importantly, narrative itself is not static. It serves the need of current political goals. For this analysis, diplomats and ministers are the primary actors involved in the production of narrative, because they are responsible for acting on the interests of the state.

The Second World War also played a notable role in the communications between the governments of the post-war societies when they deal with matters not concerning war graves, although it is often not immediately obvious. Similar to the war graves, the national narratives that the respective governments try to advance play a key role in this subject.

In the immediate communication between the governments of West Germany and Yugoslavia, the topic of the world war was largely omitted. However, choosing to avoid talking about an issue is also portraying a way to deal with it. The reason for the omission is that government individuals do not show their personal opinion towards the persons that they communicate with because they write on behalf of their governments and by extension also the narratives of their countries. Almost all of the government officials and politicians that dealt with each other in the timeframe observed in this paper had some kind of war-background. Although no evidence for previous encounters could be found, this means that essentially, former wartime enemies are now treating with each other on the diplomatic battlefields. Most of them were soldiers, some played other roles, such as jurists.

A few noteworthy examples are Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski, who was a politician of the German social democratic party (SPD) since 1946 and played an important role in the liberation of the hostages taken by the leftist German terrorist group *Rote Armee Fraktion* (RAF) in Mogadishu.⁴⁶ From 1974 to 1976 he was minister of state of the Federal Foreign Office of the FRG. For his efforts, he has received the order of the Yugoslavian Star with Golden Wreath, which is the 14th highest decoration that the SFRY could award.⁴⁷ He received this for notable contribution to understanding and all-around cooperation between the SFRY and the FRG.⁴⁸ In the Second World War, H.J. Wischniewski was *Oberleutnant* (Lieutenant) of the *Panzergranadiers* (armoured infantry, a highly prestigious branch of the German army⁴⁹). He

⁴⁵ Ibidem, p. 13.

⁴⁶ A newspaper article by the FAZ from 2005, when Wischniewski died: *Unknown author*, “Der “Held von Mogadischu “ist tot”, available at: <https://www.faz.net/-gpf-px1b> [last accessed 11.02.2020].

⁴⁷ There is a list of Yugoslavian decorations accessible here: <http://www.sammler.ru/database/index.php?cat=407>.

⁴⁸ Verbalnote, PA AA, BELG, Prot 704, 317/77.

⁴⁹ Kirchubel, Robert, *Operation Barbarossa: The German Invasion of Soviet Russia* (2013), Bloomsbury Publishing, p. 69.

has received the Iron Cross first class and the wound badge for his service⁵⁰, so he could be considered a German war hero. On the Yugoslavian side is Boris Snuderl. He was the president of the German-Yugoslavian economic committee and received the *Verdienstorden der Bundesrepublik Deutschland* (Order of Merit of the FRG) in the level of *Grosses Verdienstkreuz mit Stern und Schulterband* (Grand Cross with sash and star) for his efforts when he retired from the position. In the second world war, he was a partisan and fought against the German occupation. This is even explicitly stated in the document dealing with the bestowal.⁵¹

This also applies to some degree to the Yugoslavian president Josip Broz Tito, who was a prominent partisan leader in the war, and his secret police kidnapped and liquidated opposition members directly after the war.⁵² The inability to decide how to deal with this issue in an appropriate way has led to the failure to send official congratulations for his 83rd birthday.⁵³

It has to be mentioned at this point that governments always awarded foreign diplomats with various degrees of decorations upon their retirement from the position they held. In fact, this was pretty much a standardised procedure, where certain diplomatic positions receive a certain minimum level of decoration. Deviations from this standard could be used to show either special gratitude if the diplomat in question has done deeds beyond their obligations or - in the other direction - if the diplomat was not very helpful.⁵⁴ Not giving an award at all would have been akin to a disgrace or even a scandal, and would probably only be done if the diplomat had been involved in criminal actions or otherwise made themselves very unpopular among officials and the general populous alike.

In their diplomatic relations, governments always try to advance their own narratives towards the nations that they deal with. They do this to legitimize themselves towards the outside, but also to a degree towards the inside. This procedure can take various forms, such as limiting itself and others on certain topics that are part of the narrative, like arms trade, banning certain people from entering their country or - as in this case - war and history. The narrative of West Germany forbade that officials get connected with and represent the national socialist past that the new government wants others to forget, and that it wants to forget itself as well.

⁵⁰ Facius, Gernot, "Der Held von Mogadischu: Hans-Jürgen Wischniewski ist tot" (2005), Berliner Morgenpost, available at: <https://www.morgenpost.de/printarchiv/politik/article104165186/Der-Held-von-Mogadischu-Hans-Juergen-Wischniewski-ist-tot.html> [last accessed 11.02.2020].

⁵¹ Jaenicke, Verleihung des Verdienstordens der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, PA AA, BELG, Prot 704, 596/74.

⁵² Higher Regional Court of Munich, Judgement of 16th of July 2008, docket number: 6 St 005/05 (2), p. 9.

⁵³ Puttkamer, 83. Geburtstag Präsident Titos, PA AA, BELG, Prot 704, 214 - 704.02.

⁵⁴ Verleihung des Verdienstordens der Bundesrepublik Deutschland, PA AA, BELG, 701-705.OR-5687-JUG.

Therefore, the representatives were not allowed to take part in events that celebrate victory over Nazi Germany, such as victory parades. However, they were allowed to take part in events that mourn the war-dead of all sides equally.⁵⁵ This is because in that way, Germany can connect itself to the other nations as being a victim of the war, just like everyone else, and to escape the narrative that portrays them as the perpetual villains of global history. Yugoslavia on the other hand wanted to let the world know that they liberated themselves on their own accord.⁵⁶ Therefore, they showed this with large public events, such as the aforementioned parades. This also helped to emphasize and legitimize the special unbound position that the country had chosen, being aligned to neither NATO nor the Warsaw Pact, despite having had a socialist government.

It is noteworthy however that the Yugoslavs emphasized that they want to celebrate victory against fascism, not against Nazi Germany in particular and do not want to create anti-German resentment.⁵⁷ This is believable, because the country had been occupied by both Germany and Italy. It is likely however, that this was done for diplomatic reasons, considering that both Germanies were very important countries, not only because the most important border of the entire Cold War ran through their country, but also because the FRG was an important trade partner of Yugoslavia.⁵⁸ Despite this, the 30th anniversary of the German capitulation in 1975 was largely celebrated, in part because this would be the last milestone occasion where the surviving veterans could still actively participate.⁵⁹ And yet, the SFRY had problems deciding on its own narrative, since during the war there were several partisan groups out of which the People's Liberation Army led by Tito happened to emerge as the strongest one and later subjugated the others.⁶⁰ Another good example of the effort to connect to Germany through the memory of the war is one of the speeches given by Tito for the 30th anniversary, where he really tried to connect Germans and Yugoslavs in their struggle against fascism. He talked about how the progressive elements of the German people were the first to die in the concentration camps, which disconnects the Nazis from the rest of the German people. He also mentioned

⁵⁵ Beteiligung offizieller Vertreter der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in der UdSSR und in Osteuropa, PA AA, BELG, Prot 704, 213 - 704 SOW VS-NfD.

⁵⁶ For the allied contribution to the liberation of Yugoslavia, see: Bibb, Brian Robert, "Dueling Eagles: Mihailovic, Tito, and the Western impact on World War II Yugoslavia" (2009). University of Tennessee Honors Thesis Projects, P.15, available at: https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_chanhonoproj/1252 [last accessed 11.02.2020].

⁵⁷ Puttkamer, Jug. Feierlichkeiten zum 30. Jahrestag der deutschen Kapitulation, PA AA, BELG, Pol 704.1o, formerly Pol 321.1o.

⁵⁸ Kinzer, Stephen, "Germans in Warning of Yugoslav Economy" (1991), New York Times, available at: <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/06/28/world/germans-in-warning-on-yugoslav-economy.html> [last accessed 11.02.2020].

⁵⁹ Sahn, Veranstaltungen in Moskau zum 30. Jahrestag des Kriegsendes, PA AA, BELG, Pol 704.

⁶⁰ Puttkamer, Feiern zum 30. Jahrestag der Beendigung des 2. Weltkrieges, PA AA, BELG, Pol 704.01 JUG.

that the partisan warfare was a struggle of all antifascists against all enemies - foreigners and Yugoslavs alike. Indeed, he even explicitly mentioned the Ustasha, who he called “worse than the Germans”. This was seen by the contemporaries as breaking a taboo.⁶¹

Conclusion

This research looks to explain just some of the complexities of Second World War memory for West Germany and Yugoslavia during the post-war period: the tensions between these two nation states and between individual and state-level commemoration. Political questions of commemoration and remembrance involving national celebrations, parades and war cemeteries all shaped West German and Yugoslav national narratives of perpetration and victimhood.

In spite of this, personal narratives were maintained through generational memory. This was demonstrated in the personal letters of West Germans expressing their desires to mourn through the appropriate treatment of war graves. These letters framed the issue of war graves as personal, often familial, and therefore devoid of political meaning. However, such personal mourning still conflicted with national war narratives, necessitating intermediary organisations to bridge the gap between individual and state remembrance. These organisations, on the West German side, emphasised the non-political, humanitarian position on the treatment of war-dead and saw this issue as potentially unifying for the two post-war states. However, Yugoslavian officials stressed the connection of war graves to wider political issues, particularly the Yugoslav narrative of fascism and victimhood, making them cautious on the issue.

When it came to direct government communication, the war was often omitted, particularly the war backgrounds of individuals conducting the correspondence. National narratives and the tensions between them nevertheless remained in the context of celebrations and parades, with the West German officials being exempt from victory parades but allowed to join events of mourning all war-dead, for example. Again, the Yugoslav government often linked commemorative events and practices to their political narrative of fascism, allowing the FRG some relief from the label of the perpetrator, but they were not considered to have had the same experience of the war. A widening approach to this research, first focusing on individual mourning, then intermediary organisations and finally state-level commemoration exemplifies the contention that existed in post-war European memory. Second World War commemoration not only provided conflict between states such as West Germany and Yugoslavia but also more fundamentally between the personal and the political.

⁶¹ Puttkamer, Jug. Feierlichkeiten zum 30. Jahrestag der deutschen Kapitulation, PA AA, BELG, Pol 704.1o, formerly Pol 321.1o.

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“Folk” Culture in Yugoslavia: A Perspective Through Diplomatic Relations

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Hobsbawm stated that ‘Invented tradition is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules of ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past.’¹ He continues in saying that these traditions, ‘where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historical past.’² Folk culture (which can be understood as stated above, as a ‘set of practices’) is a method in which societies, and those which govern them, establish their values. It is therefore important to understand the origins of folk culture, as they give an insight into these values, as well as the behaviours that they promote. Since folk culture and traditions exercise certain ideologies, it should also be understood that these ideologies are ‘subject to conscious construction and symbols as subject to deliberate manipulation’.³ Consequently, by inventing and controlling common ‘folk’ culture within a particular nation, one can deliberately manipulate a society’s way of thinking.

So, what does this mean in the Yugoslav context? As a socialist state, it was formed with the notion that a shared sense of class identity, serving towards the comradeship of the proletariat, should transcend more particular forms of identity such as ethnic or religious identity. The result, one that came violently undone in the 1990s, was that Slovenes, Croats, Bosnians, Serbs, Montenegrins, and Macedonians tied together a strong sense of their individual ethnic and religious identity, with a sense of belonging to a specific nation. The Yugoslav federation was built on the sense of national identity of each of the republics, allowing them to foster a sense of identification with each republic *within* the context of its belonging to the Yugoslav state.⁴ Especially because 80% of Yugoslavia’s citizens were from an agricultural background, each

¹ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country. *Ethnologia Europaea*, pp.99.

² *ibid.*

³ Denich, B., 1994. Dismembering Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide. *American Ethnologist*, 21(2), pp.369.

⁴ Volčič, Z., “Yugo-Nostalgia: Cultural Memory and Media in the Former Yugoslavia” *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 24(1), 21-38.

nation and local area had a long history of folk culture.¹ Crucially, this culture varied from region to region. Regional folk traditions differed within the national groups which composed the Yugoslav citizenry. Despite the pluralist themes of Yugoslav unified culture, folk culture remained, and has been criticised for feeding nationalism and separatism. For instance, Oana-Cristina Popa believes that ‘nationalism or bravery, if often imaginary, is based on legends, myths and symbols, which are currently used to justify violence, atrocities, interethnic hatred or war crimes’.² Folk culture, which consists of said ‘legends, myths and symbols’ consequently has been seen by some to fuel nationalistic tensions. These nationalistic tensions have been recognised in escalating several conflicts in Yugoslavia, which became so severe that the ‘dismemberment of Yugoslavia has added the term ‘ethnic cleansing’ to the global vocabulary’.³ Matthias Thaden commented that as a result, ‘discourses of national belonging became meaningful in individuals’ everyday lives’.⁴ Even following the disintegration of Yugoslavia, Thaden believes that this sense of nationalism was so potent, that it survived through refugees of the Yugoslav Wars, who exhibited ‘long-distance nationalism’ in their new environments.⁵ He highlights particularly that this was present in Berlin, with its ‘massive influx of refugees from war-torn Croatia and Bosnia-Herzegovina’.⁶

Thus, in our secondary research, we have attempted to identify ways in which Yugoslav folk culture has displayed themes of nationalism. What can be seen from our archival research are commentaries by the West German government on the subtle presence of nationalism in the Yugoslav folk events that they attended. What is also present are cultural events that divert attention away from rising nationalism – many attempts were made to mend the destruction (both physical and mental) caused by the long history of atrocities committed in Yugoslavia.

What is Folk Culture?

Folk culture has more recently been criticized for its being used to further nationalism. Augustin Rihtman, for instance, has suggested that folk culture and festivals were only introduced by the

¹ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country. *Ethnologia Europaea*, p.100.

² Popa, O., 2012. Myths and Symbols in the Wars of Ex-Yugoslavia (1991-1999). [online] Available at: <http://www.historica-cluj.ro/anuare/AnuarHistorica2012/12.pdf> [Accessed 1 December 2019].

³ Denich, B., 1994. Dismembering Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide. *American Ethnologist*, 21(2), p.367.

⁴ Thaden, M., 2016. ‘Brotherhood and Unity’ Dissolved. Yugoslav Radio Broadcasting in (West) Berlin and the Changing Politics of Representation, 1988-95. *Südosteuropa. Journal of Politics and Society*, 64(2), pp.143.

⁵ Thaden, M., 2016. ‘Brotherhood and Unity’ Dissolved. Yugoslav Radio Broadcasting in (West) Berlin and the Changing Politics of Representation, 1988-95. *Südosteuropa. Journal of Politics and Society*, 64(2), p.142.

⁶ *ibid.*

post-war Yugoslavian government to secure its own legitimacy.⁷ In this sense, folk culture can be seen as a form of propaganda, as it spreads ideologies in support of established rule. Bette Denich is in agreement with Rihtman when she explains the use of folk culture under Milosevic's government exacerbated relationships between the Communist leaders of Yugoslavia: 'The Serbian nationalist revitalisation initiated a new phase of politics, in which the Communist leaders of different republics openly opposed each other'.⁸ For Denich, this revitalisation was a product of an 'outburst of art, literature, and scholarship on national themes portrayed the Serbian history of statehood as a succession of losses', with an emphasis on 'loss and victimisation'.⁹

Yet through the lens of German diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia in the 1960s and 1970s, the sphere of traditional or folk culture seems to be distinctly apolitical. We contend that this was because, despite the political significance we now place on ethnic and national identity reflected in traditional culture, at the time, it seemed comparatively free from the organizing political paradigm of the time – socialism versus capitalism.

Folk culture as it's defined here, describes a sense of social interaction via the art media, and differs from other modes of speaking and gesturing. This distinction is based upon sets of cultural conventions, recognized and adhered to by all the members of the group. So that folk culture can be understood as the social base of a communicative process within a group, that can be formulated through artistic ways of expression.¹⁰ In this article, these communicative notions of Folk are applied to artistic representations and actions, mostly music and festivals focusing on music. This is why culture in this sense can be also understood as a tool of progress.

The Yugoslav “Kulturation” was shaped within in the scope of the cultural and intellectual elite during the 19th and early 20th century. South Slavic cultural interconnectivity contributed to the recognition and revelation of a common culture of South Slavic peoples, bringing over time the creation of a cultural context and network with contributors set and performing in various cultural (and mostly economic) centres: Zagreb, Belgrad, Ljubljana and Novi Sad.¹¹

⁷ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country. *Ethnologia Europaea*, p.98.

⁸ Denich, B., 1994. Dismembering Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide. *American Ethnologist*, 21(2), p.371.

⁹ *ibid.*

¹⁰ Ben-Amos, D., Toward a Definition Through Folklore in Context. *The Journal of American Folklore*, 84(331), Toward New Perspectives in Folklore (1971).

¹¹ Makuljevis, Nenad “From the art of a nation to the art of a territory” in *Helsinški Odbor Za Ljudska Prava U Srbiji (Publ.) Yugoslavia from a Historical Perspective*. (Belgrade: Delfimedia) 2017.

Although it should be kept in mind that Yugoslavia's society was made up by a high proportion of agricultural population living outside these centres.

Culture as a tool of progress was used for the purpose of institutional self-legitimation, including the self-legitimation of the ruling communist authorities themselves. Yet the duty to foster the development of new Yugoslav culture was not in the exclusive domain of the state and the party. Quite to the contrary, organizations and individuals at virtually all levels of society were expected to contribute to this endeavour.¹²

Similar decisions were made when the German side planned on extending their political relations with Yugoslavia due to the Yugoslavian attitude towards the German question, calling for more cultural engagement unison with politics towards eastern European states and the fostering of 'human contacts'.¹³

Actors of the cultural and political scene tried to create and promote a sense of supranational culture. In this case, the new Yugoslav culture was seen as an integral instrument of progress, and was expected to foster the cultural, ideological and civilisational 'elevation' of the Yugoslav population by cultivating its cultural awareness and sensibility, inculcating the ability to appreciate and understand art, as well as stimulating the acquisition of technical and physical skills.¹⁴ This process might be considered as successful when a German theatre director attributes a specific area "highly cultural standard".¹⁵

In this sense, the notion of culture as an instrument of progress can be seen as having a purpose of institutional self-legitimation, including the self-legitimation of the ruling authorities themselves. Yet the duty to foster the development of new Yugoslav culture was not in the exclusive domain of the state and the party. Quite to the contrary, organizations and individuals at virtually all levels of society were expected to contribute to this endeavour.¹⁶

A change in the attitude towards what forms of culture should be promoted were made visible through what the state and party officials set in cultural policies. From the mid-1950s,

¹² Mihelj, Sabina. "The dreamworld of new Yugoslav culture and the logic of cold war binaries" in Romjin, P., Scott-Smith, G. and Segal, J. (eds) *Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West*. (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press) 2012 p.103.

¹³ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 95 1035 "Festspiele Zagreber Sommerabend 1964".

¹⁴ Mihelj, Sabina. "The dreamworld of new Yugoslav culture and the logic of cold war binaries" in Romjin, P., Scott-Smith, G. and Segal, J. (eds) *Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press) 2012.

¹⁵ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 95 1557

¹⁶ Vuletic, Dean "Sounds like America: Yugoslav Soft Power in Eastern Europe" in Romijn, Peter; Scott-Smith, Giles, Segal, Joes (edit.) *Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press) 2012, 116.

Folk Music accorded less value, stating, that it presented an outmoded image of their state and did not reflect advances in economic growth and social modernisation since 1945.¹⁷

In 1958, Marko Ristić, the president of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries, wrote that “ (...) when European intellectuals begun to take interest in us purely as some exotic, Balkan tribes through ‘our primitive folklore,’ folk music had portrayed an un-modern image of Yugoslavia’s peoples, and that we need to correct the old-fashioned and one-sided picture, which is even a little offensive for us, that the world often has of us as a picturesque and primitive country in which folklore is the highest artistic goal.¹⁸ Perhaps this is because, as Oana-Cristina Popa suggests, ‘most states in the Balkans have shown an amazing readiness to replace old symbols with new ones’.¹⁹ In addition, Augustin has stated that activists, such as Ristić, ‘seek to create new holidays, thoroughly researching the traditional ones in order to extract what is ‘good’ and ‘positive’ in them from what is ‘backward’’.²⁰ From this perspective, Ristić is seemingly trying to break away from Yugoslavia’s ‘backward’ past, which he identifies to be present in folk culture, particularly folk music. This process, Popa believes, is crucial in breaking away ‘from the ghosts of the past’, which she believes that the Balkans is doing ‘for the first time in recent history’.²¹

Accounts on Yugoslav nationalist ideologies: Historiography

We have explored various historiographies through our secondary research, which confirm our hypothesis that folk culture in Yugoslavia was largely built around particularly nationalistic ideologies. Crucially this engagement can be either positive promotion of a certain national identity it or a reaction against certain nationalisms. In addition, sources such as Matthias Thaden comment on West German perception of Yugoslav culture; ‘West German policy, which encouraged immigrants to be preoccupied with their ‘homelands’ and ‘national communities’ so as to discourage them from participating in the political system’.²² This is

¹⁷ Vuletic, Dean “Sounds like America: Yugoslav Soft Power in Eastern Europe” in Romijn, Peter; Scott-Smith, Giles, Segal, Joes (edit.) *Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press) 2012, 118.

¹⁸ Marko Ristić, *Politička književnost (za ovu Jugoslaviju): 1944-1958*. (Sarajevo: Oslobođenje, 1977), pp.253-261.

¹⁹ Popa, O., 2012. *Myths and Symbols in the Wars of Ex-Yugoslavia (1991-1999)*. [online] Available at: <http://www.historica-cluj.ro/anuare/AnuarHistorica2012/12.pdf> [Accessed 1 December 2019].

²⁰ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. *The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country*. *Ethnologia Europaea*, p.99.

²¹ Popa, O., 2012. *Myths and Symbols in the Wars of Ex-Yugoslavia (1991-1999)*. [online] Available at: <http://www.historica-cluj.ro/anuare/AnuarHistorica2012/12.pdf> [Accessed 1 December 2019].

²² Thaden, M., 2016. ‘Brotherhood and Unity’ Dissolved. *Yugoslav Radio Broadcasting in (West) Berlin and the Changing Politics of Representation, 1988-95*. *Südosteuropa. Journal of Politics and Society*, 64(2), p.144.

another to consider – what were the motives for participating in Yugoslav folk culture? Was it for the purpose of helping Yugoslavia settle rising nationalistic tensions, or rather for their own purposes as Thaden has suggested?

The claims of historians like Rihtman Augustin, who said that the purpose of folk culture in Yugoslavia was to ‘establish its legitimacy and identity’ (hence the introduction of ‘festivals and rituals and declared public holidays by federal and state legislation’), support the idea that the West German government participated in Yugoslav cultural events in order to support stability in Yugoslavia.²³

However, Augustin also comments on how ‘most Yugoslav national holidays seek to traditionally commemorate historical events, especially events of the Partisan war and socialist revolution’, highlighting how Yugoslav authorities still promoted nationalism alongside its attempts in legitimising and securing its government.²⁴ Lastly, Augustin states that ‘actual political situation at the end of the eighties shows strong connections between populist movements, traditional symbols and national mythologies accompanied with a tendency of re-Christianization’.²⁵

For Denich, too, folk culture comprises of a ‘conceptualisation of ideologies’, which focuses on ‘nationalist ideologies’ that define relations between the people and the state ‘in terms of hegemony and cultural dominance’.²⁶ Thus, the dominant folk culture provides political legitimacy to the region to which it belongs. She goes on to say that ‘both Serbian and Croatian leaders consciously revived the same nationalist ideologies that had been implicated in the wartime conflagration’ during the Titoist era.²⁷ This reflects competitive trends in securing political power through nationalistic themes.

Popa is in agreement with this perspective, when she writes Yugoslavian cultural ‘symbols have always inflamed the passion of the rival ethnicity; they have fuelled frustrations, threats or, on the contrary, they have justified national pride’.²⁸ This is particularly visible when looking at the examples of folk festivities that Augustin provides. He comments that in the

²³ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country. *Ethnologia Europaea*, p.98.

²⁴ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country. *Ethnologia Europaea*, p.99.

²⁵ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country. *Ethnologia Europaea*, p.103.

²⁶ Denich, B., 1994. Dismembering Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide. *American Ethnologist*, 21(2), p.368.

²⁷ Denich, B., 1994. Dismembering Yugoslavia: Nationalist Ideologies and the Symbolic Revival of Genocide. *American Ethnologist*, 21(2), p.369.

²⁸ Popa, O., 2012. Myths and Symbols in the Wars of Ex-Yugoslavia (1991-1999). [online] Available at: <http://www.historica-cluj.ro/anuare/AnuarHistorica2012/12.pdf> [Accessed 1 December 2019].

early, post-war years of Yugoslavia, until the 1950s, folk culture consisted of ‘frequent rallies with speeches and marches, involving large masses of people’.²⁹ Often, these events had militaristic themes too; for example, he notes that a celebration that survives today is the ‘Day of Republic’, or the ‘Day of the Army’, which consists of military parades.³⁰

Olive Lodge, who highlights that Yugoslavia comprises of a number of provinces, ‘each with its own historical background’, draws attention to religious influence on national tradition and custom.³¹ She states that ‘folk festivals in Yugoslavia are particularly interesting’ due to the influences of these religions, as well as pagan and ancient Greek cultures.³² The survival of these ancient customs is said to be the richest among the Serbs. Among Serbs, ‘Church festivals were frequently occasions for such celebration, while the guslari or wandering bards chanted the old songs and ballads from village to village, so keeping alive the spirit of nationality’.³³ Here, we can see the variation of culture from province to province, which for Lodge, is widely caused by religious differences. The combination of religious difference and the ‘spirit of nationality’ indicate sentiments of separatism and the pride which Popa speaks of.

Indications of Nationalism

From our archival research, we identified some, although very limited, accounts on folk culture in Yugoslavia. We have attempted to interpret their significance in relation to our topic, despite their lack of depth. From what we can understand, they support our claims of nationalistic themes present in Yugoslavian folk culture, as well as general attempts to move away from these nationalistic sentiments. However, it should be noted that the West German government had very little to say on such matters.

In an archival document, the event of Yugoslavian groups presenting their national folk dresses to Tito has been recorded. What is commented on first, is the development gap: “unverkennbar war auch hier das Entwicklungsgefälle der jugoslawischen Völker. Die unterentwickelten machten dabei durch farbenfrohe Kleidung wett, was ihnen die tüchtigen Slowenen an Exaktheit der Übungen überlegen waren”.³⁴

²⁹ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country. *Ethnologia Europaea*, p.101.

³⁰ Rihtman-Augustin, D., 1990. The Metamorphosis of Festivals in a Socialist Country. *Ethnologia Europaea*, p.102.

³¹ Lodge, O., 1944. Folk Festivals in Yugoslavia. *Folklore*, 55(2), p.59.

³² Lodge, O., 1944. Folk Festivals in Yugoslavia. *Folklore*, 55(2), p.60.

³³ Lodge, O., 1944. Folk Festivals in Yugoslavia. *Folklore*, 55(2), p.59.

³⁴ Translation: „The development gap of the Yugoslav peoples was also unmistakable here. The underdeveloped people were soaked with colourful clothing, which slowed them down and considered the

These colours and “patterns and embroideries of the beautiful national costumes” varied from district to district.³⁵ For instance, in Montenegro, red, black, and gold were usual colours in both men’s and women’s dresses, symbolising bloodshed, the death of slain heroes, and the “undying glory and the hope of freedom to come”.³⁶ Apparent, here, are historical themes of victory and loss that promote nationalistic sentiments. Yet it is visible that these sentiments were unrecognised by the West German government, who instead associated Yugoslavian peasant traditions with poverty. Additionally, it is stated that there was “keine Überstrapazierung des nationalen moments” (no overuse of the national movement).³⁷ This latter comment expresses a sense of caution; the fact that they added it makes it apparent that they were expecting highly nationalistic tones from this event beforehand. In this sense, it can be seen that the West German government recognised, and was wary of, rising nationalistic sentiments in Yugoslavia.

In a West German document by Firma Boehringer, she recalls that Yugoslavian musical and folkloristic presentations by an Italian group (from Pula and Maribor) made the Yugoslavian audience sentimental, as it made them remember the times of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.³⁸ From this source, we can see that at least in the eyes of the members of the West German government, nostalgic nationalism was a common theme in folk culture.

As well as nationalism in folk culture, what is present is a readiness to move away from tensions caused by rising nationalism. In August 1972, a classical music festival in central Serbia (in the town of Vrnjacka Banja) took place with the performance of eighty German and Yugoslavian singers. During this festival, Germans sung Serbian texts and folk songs in an atmosphere of “Solidarität und Achtung” (solidarity and respect).³⁹ This performance took place near Kragujevac – a place where, in 1941, hostages were shot during a massacre. The festival’s promotion of ‘solidarity and respect’ near a site of trauma indicate a readiness to move on from Yugoslavia’s violent past. The document ends by observing that the power of music connects friendships of people, which suggests a potential for recovery in Yugoslavia, through the development of new folk festivities.⁴⁰

exercises” Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 95 1535 ‘Jugoslawische Tage’ and ‘International Jundendtreff’.

³⁵ Lodge, O., 1944. Folk Festivals in Yugoslavia. Folklore, 55(2), p.59.

³⁶ Lodge, O., 1944. Folk Festivals in Yugoslavia. Folklore, 55(2), p.59.

³⁷ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 95 1535 ‘Jugoslawische Tage’ and ‘International Jundendtreff’.

³⁸ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 95 1535 ‘Jugoslawische Tage’ and ‘International Jundendtreff’.

³⁹ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, ‘German / Yugoslavian Chorwoche’.

⁴⁰ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, ‘German / Yugoslavian Chorwoche’.

Another archival document focuses on the International Folklore Festival in Zagreb in July 1972. Previously, this festival consisted mainly of a Slavic audience, but the document gives significance to the presence of more Western peoples, which suggests that Yugoslavia was making efforts to become increasingly cosmopolitan at the time. Additionally, in Zagreb, was the 1968 planning of a Yugoslav Art Exhibition which was to be held in Germany. The items for exhibition would be provided by the Museum of Applied Arts in Zagreb, which is said to possess a “historisch interessante, schöne Sammlung” (historically interesting, beautiful collection’) of histories from 12th-16th century Croatia and Slovenia.⁴¹ Here, memories of folk culture are seen to be encouraging positive international relations, rather than nationalistic tensions.

In July and August 1964, the city of Zagreb put on a cultural event called the “Zagreb Summer evenings”.⁴² A request was made to the German consulate asking for support for the events. This was to come in the form of finding an Impresario to help with the organization of several theatrical events infusing performances of the operetta “A Night in Venice”. They ask permission to help with certain program points because they fit well with the capabilities of foreign assistance. This includes theatrical performances, one called “the Development of Dance”, as well as a diving display for which an Olympic diving platform was arranged. There are no further details in the correspondence about what the rest of the programming of the festival was like. From this we may speculate that when it came to cultural matters, the official on the Yugoslav side did not care to share information generally and the official on the German side were not bothered to ask for details. This would indicate that in their diplomatic relations West Germany placed a low level of significance on cultural matters in general. The official from the Yugoslav side concluded his letter by stating: “I would be grateful, if the plans for the ‘Zagreb Summer Evenings’ would be taken up. Given the poor political relationship between us and Yugoslavia, which is now reaching a new low, we should be all the more open to Yugoslav suggestions for cooperation in the apolitical field.”⁴³

The officials explicitly state that they would like to cooperate on cultural matters in light of their country’s current tense political relationship. This indicates that far from seeing the cultural area as fraught with potential political implications, they merely saw it as outside of politics. Just recognizing this form of basic mass entertainment as apolitical or otherwise free from ideological differences.

⁴¹ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, ‘International Folklore Festival in Zagreb 1972’.

⁴² Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 95 1035 ‘Festspiele Zagreber Sommerabend 1964’.

⁴³ Politisches Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes, B 95 1035 ‘Festspiele Zagreber Sommerabend 1964’.

Vuletic’s opinion is contrary to that of the idea of cultural as apolitical. He recalls that in 1958, the Central Committee of the lcy – which comprised the party’s top leaders and had an ideological commission that discussed cultural matters – declared that cultural propaganda was more important than economic or socio-political propaganda and recognised a need to study how other states were promoting themselves abroad. A year later, it was observed that, with the changes in the Cold War, propaganda played an even greater role in the promotion of a state’s cultural and economic achievements. This was especially due to the ‘thaw’ in Eastern Europe which, under Khrushchev’s tenure as Soviet leader, saw a relaxation on restrictions in cultural life as well as improvements in relations with the West. The Central Committee noted that ‘in the new situation’ international meetings and cultural ties had become more important for Yugoslavia’s affirmation abroad, and it accordingly urged its artists to participate more in them.⁴⁴

Summary of Research and Conclusion

Our main topic of research attempted to answer the question: how has folk culture reflected the existing, rising, and descending trends of nationalism in Yugoslavia in the time frame from 1968 until 1975 based on statements found in correspondences between Germany and German diplomats in Yugoslavia.

In order to answer this question, we have explored the following subcategories:

1. A plurality of folk cultures built around nationalism in unified Yugoslavia.
2. Commentary and actions by the West German government regarding the worsening situation in Yugoslavia.
3. Movements away from nationalism in Yugoslavia, focused on healing wounds created by toxic nationalism.

We experienced great difficulty in finding direct statements on Yugoslav folk culture, or even culture in general, by going through the documents of the political archive of the foreign office of Germany. We concluded that the culture of the common people had little to do with West German interests, because as mentioned before, it seems that the West German government regarded such festivities and events as apolitical – and thus of little significance. Therefore, the focus was set on how Yugoslav Folk Culture was perceived by the employees of Wsern German foreign offices and to investigate if there were any political ambitions

⁴⁴ Vuletic, Dean “Sounds like America: Yugoslav Soft Power in Eastern Europe” in Romijn, Peter; Scott-Smith, Giles, Segal, Joes (edit.) *Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press) 2012, p.117.

phrased following the perception of cultural events, practices and productions. The relationship of the two countries was affected by the German partition, and after the discontinuities that followed, they resumed their relations in 1968. The correspondences were mostly written in the context of bigger music or theatre festivals held in Yugoslavia, or visits of West German artists in the country. Just a few were on visits vice versa. But impressions of Yugoslav culture could be found, especially when it came to differ between each nationality (for example, commentaries on Yugoslavian folk dress).

Through our secondary research, we were able to find more information specific to Yugoslavia's folk culture, although even this was limited. From our research, we could see that many historians believed in the role of folk culture inspiring nationalistic sentiments and thus worsening the already tense situation in Yugoslavia. This was vaguely confirmed by our primary research though descriptions were unfocused and overgeneralised, so required a lot of contextual interpretation.

As a result, it was concluded that the West German government held little interest in the cultural affairs of Yugoslavia as it was seen to be apolitical and therefore, to them, of little value.

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Political Representations of Yugoslav Culture in German Diplomatic Files

Liu Chenxi, Vincent de Bruin and Sophia Jereczek

As the previous texts in this volume have illustrated the various perspectives of Yugoslav cultural policies and productions, the following articles are all aimed to describe and analyse the representations of Yugoslav culture within the political discourses. The general approach is to discuss the cultural and political history of Yugoslavia through the prism of diplomatic relations based on the files in the German diplomatic archive. Our common question is that apart from analysing the political influences on cultural activities, does culture (in a broader sense) have counter effects on politics, and how does culture reveal itself in political discourses. As the whole political sphere being relatively broad, we tried to focus on different aspects of the Yugoslav culture in multiple political dimensions, and further developed our own specific questions:

First, in the background of the Cold War, studying the way that Yugoslavia placed its culture when struggling for a political alternative to the existing Cold War divisions may show us how international power struggle affects the Yugoslav culture. Second, on the ideological level, different observations of Yugoslav economy from the two Germanys hints us how the same “facts” could be influenced by cultural thinking patterns. Finally, an analysis of the Yugoslav immigrants in West Germany draws attention to the culture of political communities in a foreign land.

Although the topics we have chosen differ a lot, they intermingle with each other under the framework of political representation. In addition, we all tried to take approach to these topics from a transnational or even global history perspective by placing our questions beyond the national borders and comparing sources from different countries.

Based on the sources that we found during the archive visits, the time period of our research topics is from the 1960s to the 1970s. Though our discoveries and analyses may not be satisfactory due to the limitation of the sources, these articles tend to serve as an attempt to analyse culture and cultural policies in a global political discourse.

1. Yugoslavia's cultural position in the non-aligned movement

This part tries to analyse Yugoslavia's non-alignment policy from a cultural perspective.

During the time of Cold War, Yugoslavia tried to conduct a policy of “staying apart from both East and West”¹, in order to alleviate the pressure of diplomatic isolation after Tito-Stalin split. Such policy required Yugoslavia to seek new allies from the countries who kept their distance from any major power bloc on a global scale. This led to Yugoslavia’s promotion of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries in Belgrade, 1961.

However, the political goals of the non-aligned countries were not always consistent: while the alliance of Egypt and Yugoslavia emphasized the possibility of “neutralism”, other countries such as China were more eager to promote an “Asian-Africanism” based on anti-whiteness or anti-colonialism background.² As the two concepts more or less contradict each other, like Jeffrey Byrne pointed out, one of the important issues when studying the non-aligned movement is whether the movement was committed to creating a unified identity.³

On the other hand, the question can also be formulated as whether a common identity constitutes the prerequisite for the political goals that they wanted to achieve. Current research analysed the neutralism strategy from the perspective of political and diplomatic history, but the impact of this policy on the representation of Yugoslav culture has not been thoroughly explored.⁴ Therefore, this research hopes to examine how Yugoslavia placed its culture when struggling for a political alternative to the existing Cold War divisions, and as a European country, whether the “culture of whiteness” had an influence on its fight for the leadership of the non-aligned movement.

Based on the sources from the German diplomatic archive and the Records of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty Research Institute, this research also attempts to take a global historical perspective by placing Yugoslav cultural policy in a global context. As the Belgrade conference of non-aligned countries was a crucial step for Yugoslavia during the formation of non-aligned movement, the sources are mainly from the time period around 1961.

Approaching “Third World”

¹ Aleksandar Životić and Jovan Čavoški, “On the Road to Belgrade: Yugoslavia, Third World Neutrals, and the Evolution of Global Non-Alignment, 1954–1961”, *Journal of Cold War Studies*, Volume 18, Number 4, Fall 2016, p. 81

² Čavoški, Jovan, “Between Great Powers and Third World neutralists- Yugoslavia and the Belgrade Conference of the Non- Aligned Movement, 1961”, in *The Non-Aligned Movement and the Cold War*, London: Routledge, 2014, pp. 184-206.

³ Byrne, Jeffrey James, “Beyond Continents, Colours, and the Cold War: Yugoslavia, Algeria, and the Struggle for Non-Alignment”, *The International History Review*, 2015, Vol. 37, No. 5, p. 914.

⁴ See Irwin Z., “The Untold Stories of Yugoslavia and Nonalignment”, in Ognjenović G., Jozelić J. (eds) *Revolutionary Totalitarianism, Pragmatic Socialism, Transition*, London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016, pp. 139-166.

On the one hand, it can be seen that Yugoslavia tried to tie itself closer to Asian, African and Latin American countries, such as establishing cultural exchange agreements with countries as far as Indonesia.

They set up projects to encourage exchange students, language learning, and “... shall endeavour to include in the curricula of history and geography of its educational institutions”.⁵ Unlike today’s highly globalized cultural exchanges, Germans actually questioned the effectiveness of such agreement, saying that whether a real cultural exchange can be achieved was questionable, for “the languages of the two countries hardly mean anything for each other, which is why so far no Indonesian student is interested in learning Serbo-Croatian.”⁶

Although the Germans questioned the sincerity among non-aligned countries, Yugoslavia did seem to be very popular at the time. The Belgrade conference in 1961 opened with a four-day conference of African exchange students in European universities, as Yugoslavia demonstrated its strong interests in uniting with African countries, which “was for them of much greater importance than was usually believed”⁷, as commented by the monitor of Radio Free Europe. Besides assisting personnel training at vocational schools, universities and institutes, “About 100 African students are now [1962] studying in Yugoslavia on scholarships and fellowships.”⁸ However, the actual influences of these cultural cooperations require further study.

Distance from Europe

On the other hand, although there was the expanding gap between “the West” and “Europe”, the countries from outside Europe hold a rather ambiguous understanding of this. Therefore, Yugoslavia sometimes had to distance itself from the European identity.

Under the Iron Curtain, Europe was divided into East and West. Like other relatively small countries, Yugoslavia had to strive to “establish a solid balance in their relations both with East and West”⁹ for its limited power on the global stage. However, this does not mean that the split of East and West was the only tension in the Cold War. Other perspectives of cultural background also competed with each other on the battlefield.

For example, the discourse of (non)whiteness was a powerful cultural-political tool, and Yugoslavia’s anxiety about its “whiteness” is also quite visible. They warned about the Chinese

⁵ Indonesische-jugoslawisches Kulturabkommen, Djakarta, den 22. Juli 1959, Article 4.

⁶ Indonesische-jugoslawisches Kulturabkommen, Djakarta, den 22. Juli 1959, S. 2.

⁷ “Yugoslavia and Egypt”, 31 August 1962. HU OSA 300-8-3-9591, p. 1.

⁸ “Yugoslavia and Egypt”, 31 August 1962. HU OSA 300-8-3-9591, p. 1.

⁹ “Yugoslavia Looks Both Ways”, 30 April 1963. HU OSA 300-8-3-9630, p. 1.

activities in Asian and African countries, “which clearly leads to racial hatred and the implacable enmity of coloured people against the whites.”¹⁰ For Yugoslavia, how to get rid of the cultural background of whiteness, or how to confront when a country like China problematized it, was very important when fighting for the leadership of the Non-Aligned Movement.

In addition to that, the divided Europe itself played as not only geopolitical but also cultural identity. Although Yugoslavia accused Chinese promotion of “Asian-Africanism” as an act of exclusiveness¹¹, it also consciously distanced itself from other neutral European countries such as the Nordic countries and Switzerland in the Non-Aligned Movement. Although these countries were neutral, they were not invited to participate in the non-alignment meetings.¹²

Because of the limited sources, this segment does not intend to make any conclusion on Yugoslavia’s representation of culture in political discourses during the Cold War. Rather, it attempts to draw more attention to the role that Yugoslav culture played in the Non-Aligned Movement. Geopolitical transformation often requires the establishment of new identity, thus forming new cultural narratives. During such unprecedented intimate political cooperation with non-European countries, how far did the political trust rely on the construction of the same identity, and whether these politically orientated cultural exchanges have actual impacts on Yugoslav cultural identity may be worth future studying.

2. Two perspectives on the Yugoslav economy: the differences between East- and West German observations

This section is a short analysis of the observations on Yugoslavia’s economy made by the diplomatic services of the West German Bundesrepublik Deutschland (BRD), and the East German Deutsche Demokratische Republik (DDR). Both the BRD and the DDR maintained at least a basis of diplomatic relations with Yugoslavia, and employed a diplomatic service in Belgrade, where the reports used in this section were written. The initial idea was to analyse how the diplomats from both sides portrayed and interpreted Yugoslavia’s unique economic culture. This however, failed to be realised, as the nature of the documents in the archives was

¹⁰ “Yugoslav Charges Chinese Promote Racism”, 30 July 1963. HU OSA 300-8-3-9715, p. 1.

¹¹ “Yugoslav Charges Chinese Promote Racism”, 30 July 1963. HU OSA 300-8-3-9715, p. 3.

¹² Auswärtiges Amt, B130/4206A: Konferenz der Neutralen Staaten in Bled am 1. 9. 1961. Bohn, 27/07/1961, S. 1-3.

too factual and objective to be used in such a way. The report below is a comparison between the observations made by the BRD and the DDR on political events related to Yugoslavia's economy, as well as Yugoslavia's economic developments. Since there were some striking differences between the relayed information from both Germanies, this report should still have some relevance to the theme, regardless of the failure to answer the originally intended research question.

In order to assess the East- and West German perspectives on the Yugoslavian economy, a short review of this economy is in order. The first paragraph of this section covers the academic discourse on the topics of self-management and decentralisation in Yugoslavia. The second paragraph is an assessment of the West German reports on Yugoslavia's economy, and the third paragraph is a similar assessment of the reports from the East Germans. By comparing the secondary literature to the reports, some things can be said about the perspectives of both sides. The goal is to find the topics that are focused on, as well as the topics that are avoided or only vaguely mentioned. Comparing the reports from both sides with each other, as well as with the secondary literature, serves as a rudimentary way of triangulating the data from the different sources. For several reasons, it is important not to come to strong conclusions or claims. Firstly, these archival sources are circumstantial, only covering a few years and events, and the sources from East Germany do not cover the same years and events as the sources from West Germany. Secondly, the contexts in which the reports from both sides were written are different, since the quality of both diplomatic services, their access to information, and their mandates from home were different.

Yugoslavia's economy in academic literature

This section deals with the academic perception of Yugoslavia's economy, most notably its system of self-management. The system of self-management in the Yugoslavian economy can be regarded as a unique project within the realm of socialist experiments, and came about as a reaction to the Tito-Stalin split.¹³ After the split, Tito's Yugoslavia was neither aligned with the East, nor with the West. This made Yugoslavia a rather neutral country during the Cold War, and influences from both sides shaped its developments. This could be observed in Yugoslavia's economic system, which was socialist in name, while bearing features of capitalism as well. After the split between Tito and Stalin, Yugoslavia's original plans for rapid industrialisation aided by the Soviet Union had to be withdrawn. Tito's changed the plans for

¹³ Hudson, 2003, p. 42-45.

Yugoslavia's economy, and initiated the policy of self-management of enterprises by their workers, which required significant decentralisation on the political side. The forefront of this new development was Yugoslavia's agricultural sector, and it was here that self-management was first tried in practice. Politically, the People's Committees and the workers' councils received greater influence and a wider range of powers as local governmental bodies. In addition, power was transferred from the federal to the republic level.¹⁴

Between 1952 and 1965, Yugoslavia experienced over a decade of rapid economic growth. This initial success did not last long, and the first signs of overstretching and decline already appeared as soon as 1962.¹⁵ The problems of Yugoslavia's economy during the late 60s, 70s and 80s have several causes, which partially lie in the economic structure of the country. Fundamental problems were the exclusion of the workers from 'significant decision making' in the self-management system, as well as the enormous amount of strikes, or 'work stoppages' that paralysed the Yugoslavian economy.¹⁶ Inflation was especially high in the (late) 80s and 90s, which fall out of the scope of the documents. Nevertheless, with inflation as high as 30% in 1965/66¹⁷, it could still be an important topic in the documents at hand.

Observations from West German diplomatic reports

The documents that were used to analyse the West German perspective on the Yugoslav economy are all part of a series of correspondence between the West German diplomats in Belgrade and the Foreign Ministry back home in Bonn. The first entry is from the 24th of November 1970, and the last entry from the 28th of May 1971. The reports number a total of 72 pages.

When it comes to West German interest in Yugoslavia's economy, the cultural aspects of it are not of any importance. West German diplomats seemed to observe Yugoslavia's economy merely from a political point of view, as they reported on conflicts between law and citizens, tensions between nationalities, and the shortcomings of the system of self-management. This can be seen in the careful analysis of the composition of workers' committees on the basis of ethnicity/nationality. For example, the diplomats reported the exact numbers of Serbs, Croats, Slovenians and other nationalities that were in a delegation coming to the Congress on Self-Management in 1971.¹⁸ At the Congress, they also observed some cynicism among the visitors

¹⁴ Hudson, 2003, p. 45-48.

¹⁵ Liotta, 2001, p. 5.

¹⁶ Liotta, 2001, p. 5-6

¹⁷ Liotta, 2001, p. 6.

¹⁸ B42/232, p. 70-71

from the DDR, who were apparently convinced that the Yugoslav economy would not last much longer.¹⁹

The West German diplomats relayed several speeches held by President Tito and the party Presidium.²⁰ The speeches reveal that the Yugoslav leadership was aware of the economic and political problems in the country and was trying to reform the country in several ways. Apart from mentioning the required reforms, the leadership also mentions sources of misinformation and slander by parties both in- and outside of Yugoslavia.

Observations from East German diplomatic reports

The sources used to analyse the East German observations are two series of correspondence between East German diplomats stationed in Belgrade and their colleagues in Berlin. The first series contains messages from several months in the year 1960, and numbers a total of 31 pages. The second series is a rather unorganised mixture of documents from the years 1971, 1972, and 1974. Of this series, 25 pages were deemed relevant for this research.

The East Germans closely watched the relations between Yugoslavia and the socialist block and were interested in the achievements of Yugoslavia's economy. They did not seem to be interested in Yugoslavian labour culture. Their diplomats sometimes criticised Yugoslavia's economy from a Marxist perspective, practically claiming that the Yugoslavs used a wrong interpretation of Marxism in the creation and development of their economic and political system.²¹

The documents contain East German reports on a conference on self-management held in 1974. They report that the Yugoslav leadership blames 'the forces of the West' for using the hardship and internal conflicts of Yugoslavia for their own gain. This is the same type of blame shifting that the West Germans mentioned in their reports. That said, the Yugoslav leadership also looks at their own mistakes, and state that using 'self-critique' is an important task in their political work.²² The East Germans recognise the many economic problems that Yugoslavia was facing, and state that Yugoslavia's reforms are an attempt to overcome the failures of the self-management system.²³

¹⁹ B42/232, p. 73.

²⁰ B42/232 p. 239-242

²¹ M1A 5156, p. 22

²² M1C 890 76, p. 1-2

²³ M1C 890 76, p. 7-9

3. Yugoslav immigrants in West Germany – A cultural politically united society abroad? An attempt to give a perspective of Yugoslavs (political) attitude in Germany

In the context of giving different perspectives to the Yugoslav culture in political discourses, the following article is about the Yugoslavs in Germany. As the timeframe of this work is the 1960s and 1970s, the sources of this article found in the Auswärtiges Amt are all from the 1960s.

This paper tries to give a perspective of the political, and thus cultural, attitude of Yugoslavs living in West Germany and their cultural-political interest. As political interests and opinions are part of the cultural identity of a society, this article will show the cultural attitudes of Yugoslav immigrants in Germany through their political attitude.

To answer the question: “Yugoslav immigrants in West Germany – A cultural politically united society abroad”, it will be figured out, based on secondary literature, the main reasons for the immigration of Yugoslavs to Germany. After that, two sources from the political archive of the Auswärtiges Amt will be analysed.

Reasons for the Yugoslav immigration to West Germany

In first place, it is necessary to know the main reasons for the immigration of the Yugoslavs to West Germany. Many Yugoslavs migrated to Germany in the 1960s and 1970s as guest-workers, especially because of harder “bad” working conditions in their homeland or the lack of work. Even though unemployment may be a reason for the migratory movement, most of the Yugoslav guest-workers didn’t emigrate because of unemployment.²⁴ Another cause was the wage differential between West Europe and Yugoslavia. The ideal of many Yugoslav guest-workers was to work “some years” in West Germany or other western European countries and come back with savings. Both countries, West Germany and Yugoslavia, emphasized the temporary character of the residence in West Germany. Still, this temporary aspect did not have a political or legal base. In the end, most of the Yugoslavs stayed permanently in West Germany, even though they had planned to stay only some years.²⁵ Nevertheless, the Yugoslav

²⁴ cf. Romic: Sprachidentität und -struktur der zweiten Generation ex-jugoslawischer Migrantennachkommen in Deutschland, S.187.

²⁵ cf. Romic: Sprachidentität und -struktur der zweiten Generation ex-jugoslawischer Migrantennachkommen in Deutschland, S.189.

state tried, mostly politically, to maintain the loyalty of the guest-workers to Yugoslavia.²⁶ As it can be seen, many Yugoslavs living in West Germany left Yugoslavia because of economic reasons. Nonetheless, others were exiled because of political differences. Thus, there was a great spectrum of causes to leave the country of origin which lead to different political attitudes and opinions. In the end, those reflect a part of the Yugoslav culture abroad.

Analysis of the documents

With reference to the different motives of leaving Yugoslavia, next two documents from the archives will be analysed, which give an insight into the cultural political attitude of the Yugoslav immigrants in West Germany.

In the first place, a document from the BRD about the development of the emigration of Yugoslavia will be analysed. This document describes, on the one hand, the nationalism and federalism inside and outside of Yugoslavia. On the other hand, it illustrates the political organisations and their rivalries in the context of emigration.

After that, the second document from West Germany about the support of the entry of Croats to West Germany will be considered. It will show the different (and expected) behaviour of the Croats but also other Yugoslav nations living in Germany.

The first document “Die Entwicklung der Emigration aus Jugoslawien” was signed on the 08/05/1961 in München from the “Studiengruppe Südost München 15”²⁷. The following part will focus on the political attitude of Serbs and Croats to show cultural diversity.

In the first place, it differentiates three political tendencies that compete with each other: the “great-Serbian”, “Great-Croatian” and Yugoslavian.²⁸ The Serbs are divided into one nationalist group, which considerate Tito as an enemy of the people and democracy and suffer the Croat Ustascha-propaganda against the Serbs. Then, several groups that all support the Yugoslavian state but distinguish between a more federative state, a democratic and anti-communism state and a unitary state.²⁹

Another nationalist tendency can be found in two Croat organisations, one of them – the “HNO” – had its central in München. In an opinion poll made in London 1960³⁰ 90% of the exiled Croats voted for the independence of Croatia. The most common reasons for emigration

²⁶ cf. Baraulina: Ägyptische, afghanische und serbische Diasporagemeinden in Deutschland und ihre Beiträge zur Entwicklung ihrer Herkunftsländer, S.18

²⁷ cf. Auswärtiges Amt, B12/336.

²⁸ cf. Auswärtiges Amt, B12/336, S.2.

²⁹ cf. Auswärtiges Amt, B12/336, S. 9-12.

³⁰ cf. Auswärtiges Amt, B12/336, S. 17.

were the wish for political, social and economic freedom. Nevertheless, there were also Croats that wanted a united Yugoslavia: the newspaper "Kroatische Morgenröte" published in München declared themselves for a united state of the Yugoslavs, including political, cultural, economic and social equality.³¹

All in all, the political spectrum also abroad was very diverse and went from Pro-Yugoslavia opinions, to ideas of a politically changed Yugoslavia and nationalist attitudes which were Anti-Yugoslavia.

Nevertheless, it is important to know that the analysis of the Studiengruppe Südost München focussed on politically active groups and formations of the Yugoslavs. Additionally, it was working for the German government which was probably more interested in possible dangerous political groups than moderate opinions. As described in the beginning, many Yugoslavs came to West Germany because of economic reasons with the intention to go back and not out of political dissatisfaction.

The second document "Förderung der Einreise kroatischer Flüchtlinge aus Österreich und Italien in die Bundesrepublik" was signed on 26/06/1962 in Bonn from the Bundesministerium des Inneren. It explains the behaviour and political interests of Croats in Germany and the reaction of other Yugoslavs living in Germany to the Croat nationalism.

The 7000 Croats in Germany show different political and cultural interests: some groups prefer the Yugoslav state, others the hegemony of Serbia. Still, there are Croats that argue in favour of an independent state of Croatia.³² This last group has different organisations in Germany and the most extremist, which is connected to the Ustascha, attacked the Yugoslav trade mission in 1962³³ and in the same year committed an attack by bombing a Swedish department that represented Yugoslav interests.³⁴ Other Yugoslavs in Germany protested against these and other anti-Yugoslav activities³⁵, which shows an approval to the Yugoslav state and cultural identification with Yugoslavia aboard.

Especially the guest workers had a loyal attitude to Tito and the regime. As it has been demonstrated, most of the guest-workers had the intention to go back to Yugoslavia after some years of working and saving money in West Germany. Thus, the guest-workers can be considered as Yugoslavs who conform with the Yugoslav political and cultural identity.

³¹ cf. Auswärtiges Amt, B12/336, S. 16.

³² cf. Auswärtiges Amt, B82/1222, S.2.

³³ cf. Thaden: Politischer Aktivismus von Exilkroaten, S: 85

³⁴ cf. Brey: Bonn und Belgrad, S.636.

³⁵ cf. Auswärtiges Amt, B82/1222, S. 3.

Because of that, it comes to conflicts between the guest workers and (nationalist) Croats which can be interpreted as cultural conflicts.

As can be seen, many Yugoslav immigrants identified themselves with the Yugoslav culture and politics, even Croats. The reason they left was more economic than out of political or cultural conflicts. Still, some emigrants – mostly Croats but also Serbs – left Yugoslavia out of political reasons or because they could not identify with the culture of one Yugoslavia but only with their national one.

Answering the question of whether Yugoslav immigrants in West Germany formed a cultural, politically united society abroad, the Yugoslav immigrants in West Germany can be described as a culturally divided society out of cultural political reasons. The cause of the migration influenced the political attitude: as it has been shown, the Yugoslavs who have left because of economic reasons, used to identify themselves with the Yugoslav culture and (at least) conform with the Yugoslav state. Other Yugoslavs, who left the country because they opposed to the idea of one Yugoslav nation, had separative attitudes and couldn't identify themselves with the Yugoslav culture and politics.

4. Conclusion

After skimming over the three segments, we can see there are three layers of political discourse in our research. In the background of the Cold War, not only international relationships had influences on cultural policies, defining culture also played a role in geopolitical discourses. Today people discuss the difficulties of identity that former Yugoslav countries encountered when joining the EU, these difficulties may come from not only the historical traditions and economic situations, but are also related to the political doctrine of searching for alternatives outside Europe in the last century.

Apart from the more “obvious” clashes among international cultural identities, ideology provides another perspective to understand the relationship between culture and politics. The reports from East and West Germany show significant overlap in the topics they cover. Both sides were mostly interested in the economic and political developments in Yugoslavia. The documents analysed in this segment mostly focused on tensions in domestic politics, ethnic strife, economic problems, elections, and speeches. The assessment of Yugoslavia's economy in these documents was purely observational, with some judgment being made from an ideological standpoint. Where the West Germans regarded the failures of the self-management system as a mere fact, the East Germans tried to explain this through ideology.

Finally, even people who had the same background tied culture with politics differently. The cultural political Yugoslav society in West Germany went from nationalists who oppose the idea of the state of Yugoslavia to others who identify themselves with their country of origin and protest against separatist attitudes.

Instead of analysing the division of culture and politics, our topic hopes to focus on the entanglement of cultural and political discourses. Discussing from national, ideological and individual perspectives, our research illustrates that different aspects of culture also exist within the seemingly “pure” political issue, and sometimes even have counter-effects on the latter. We also hope to show that the method of comparison is indispensable during such research.

However, these different aspects or layers of political cultures are not always distinguishable. They usually overlap and sometimes even conflict with each other. Therefore, the delicate relationship of culture and politics must go through careful examination before coming to any conclusion, and more analysis from a transnational or global historical perspective is needed.

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